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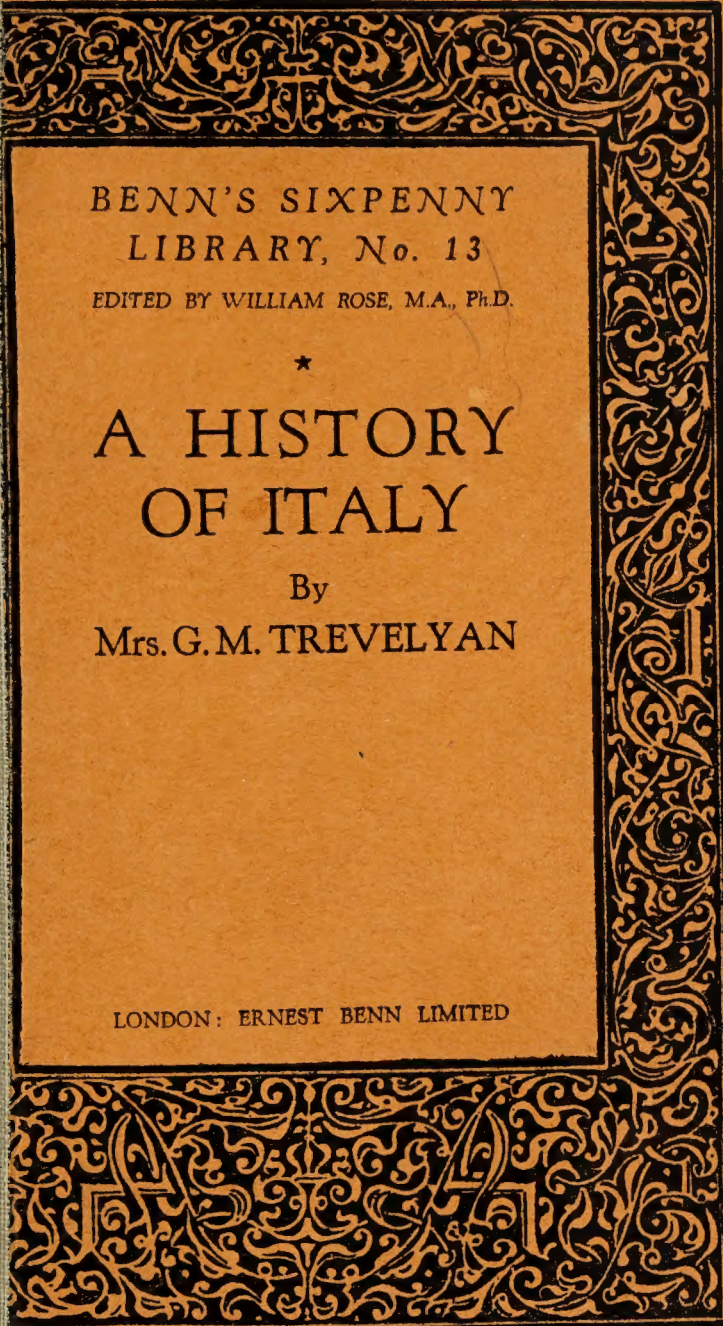
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A HISTORY OF ITALY

By
Mrs. G. M. TREVELYAN

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A HISTORY OF ITALY

By MRS. G. M. TREVELYAN

Author of "A Short History of the Italian People"



LONDON: ERNEST BENN LIMITED
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A HISTORY OF ITALY

CHAPTER I

FROM THE BARBARIAN INVASIONS TO THE CORONATION OF CHARLEMAGNE

THE people of Modern Italy, alone among European nations, have behind them the tradition of a system of government that once dominated the world. They have emerged by direct descent from Ancient Rome, but in the welter of race invasions which followed each other in the fifth and sixth centuries A.D. the continuity of their civic life was broken, the forms of Roman government gave way and the native Italian stock throughout the land became mixed by intermarriage with the ruder barbarian races. Yet, for all that, the Italian of to-day looks back to the rulers of the Capitol and the Palatine as his forefathers, while Spaniard, Briton, Frenchman, German, and Russian look to a shadowy past wherein the warring tribes grope ever backward towards the nameless life of forest and clearing, snow and steppe. Italy alone has the great background, and it affects her history down to the present day. How the old life of Roman Italy was apparently submerged under barbarian waves, but survived in the Roman Church and in the thousand half-conscious memories of an urban population; how it took new forms in the City States of the Middle Ages and burst into conscious pride once more in the Classical Renaissance; how contact with the stronger nations of Modern Europe subjected it again to conquest from without, until in the fulness of time a true Italian nationality emerged from the kneading of Napoleon; this and much more goes to make the History of Italy. If only the barest sketch of such a story can be attempted in the present outline, it

may at least serve to introduce the reader to a subject that yields to none in wealth and fascination of detail.

Throughout the fourth century A.D., the machinery of the overgrown Roman Empire still functioned, in spite of inward decay and outward pressure, owing to the reorganisation it had undergone at the hands of the Emperors Diocletian and Constantine. These two had effected the first sub-division of the Imperial territories among a varying number of "Cæsars" and "Augusti," and had fixed their own residence at Byzantium or Constantinople, as it was named in honour of the first Christian Emperor. It was from here that the barbarian danger, both from north and east, could best be met, and it was hither that the Goths, long uneasily settled in Trajan's province of Dacia beyond the Danube, directed their first overwhelming attack. In 378 they defeated and killed the Emperor Valens at the Battle of Adrianople. Constantinople was barely saved by the good soldier Theodosius, who adopted the policy of drafting the barbarians into the Imperial armies as *fæderati*, and so long as Theodosius lived he could master his Gothic and Frankish chiefs, and set them to guard the frontiers under Roman military titles. But on his death in 395 the Empire of the world passed into the hands of his two feeble sons, Arcadius in the East, Honorius in the West; and Italy, which had remained so long inviolate, found herself exposed at last to the full weight of the barbarian attack.

It came first from the Visigoths, encamped for the last twenty years in Illyricum under their chieftain Alaric, whom Theodosius had tamed to Roman ways, but who, stung to anger by Honorius' faithless dealings with him, invaded Italy in 408 and marched unopposed to Rome. The trembling Senate bought him off with the famous ransom—5,000 lbs. of gold, 30,000 lbs. of silver, 3,000 scarlet hides, 4,000 silken tunics, and 3,000 lbs. of pepper. But the danger was only half averted, for Alaric was bent on securing

recognition and a settlement from Honorius, who cowered securely in the watery stronghold he had made at Ravenna and refused all terms. A second time Alaric returned to Rome and set up a puppet Emperor; finally, on St. Bartholomew's Day, 410, the Gothic host broke in. It was the first time that the holy city had been sacked since the descent of Brennus with his Gauls, and although Alaric allowed his men only three days for plunder, the efficacy of their search was attested by the long lines of loaded waggons that followed the conquerors along the Appian Way as they marched south towards Sicily. But the Church saw the avenging hand of St. Peter in the sudden death that overtook Alaric in Calabria, before he could carry his host across the narrow sea.

After the Goths came the Huns, under their King Attila (452), but, already repulsed in Gaul in the previous year by Romans and Visigoths together, the Hunnish host was confronted on its march through Northern Italy by an impressive embassy from Rome, headed by Pope Leo I., and though no army barred the way, the fact remains that Attila withdrew. Rome was therefore reserved for an attack from the Vandals, a fierce Teutonic race settled in Northern Africa, three years later (455), but the passage of the Huns along the shore of the Adriatic had had one permanent result—the colonisation of the islands of the Venetian lagoon, from Grado to Chioggia, by thousands of refugees from the mainland villages, flying in panic terror before Attila, the Scourge of God. Here in security and isolation the fugitives and their descendants dwelt for centuries, until from these humble lagoon communities there arose in due time *La Dominante*, Venice.

Until the middle of the fifth century the descendants of Theodosius—Honorius, Galla Placidia, and her son Valentinian—wore the Imperial purple and reigned for the most part at Ravenna; but the Theodosian line became extinct in 454, and a succession of short-

lived Emperors ensued, made and unmade by the leaders of their barbarian troops, who have received in history the nickname of the Phantom Emperors. Their line ended in Romulus Augustulus, deposed in 476 by the Herulian chief Odovacar, who saw that the time had come to brush away the fiction of a Western Empire. He sent the Imperial insignia to Constantinople with a message to the Emperor Zeno that in future one Emperor would be sufficient for the Roman world.

This event, over which the ripples closed quietly enough in Odovacar's day, is usually designated by historians the "Fall of the Western Empire." Nor did any revival take place until, in a very different spirit from that of these Barrack Emperors, Charles the Great accepted from the hands of Pope Leo III., in the year 800, the crown of the "Holy Roman Empire." In that long interval of time Italy fell a prey to barbarian domination, not merely in the form of military rule, but in that of the invasion and settlement of whole barbarian races. The Eastern Emperor himself set the next horde in motion by commissioning Theodoric, King of the Ostrogoths (then occupying part of what is now Roumania) to put down the upstart Odovacar and "win the western kingdom for himself and the Goths" (488). Hence the Ostrogothic conquest, which led to the settlement of some quarter of a million "noble savages" upon the soil of Italy and to the peaceful reign of the great Theodoric, whose constant ambition it was to unite *Gothia* and *Romania* in a well-ordered commonwealth. He employed Roman administrators, maintained the Roman law in full force, and even laboured to repair the walls of Rome, though his own residence was still mainly at Ravenna. But on his death the Gothic kingdom showed signs of disintegration, just at a time when the Eastern Empire, under the able Justinian, was in a position to make a determined bid for the re-conquest of Italy. For nearly twenty years

(535-553) the country was wasted by the long war that raged between Goths and Greeks—for the armies of Justinian, under Belisarius and Narses, though composed of many and various Balkan tribes, were officered by men who spoke the Greek tongue in spite of the fiction of calling it *Roman*. Rome under Belisarius endured a siege of a whole year from the Goths, who though unable at that time to take the city, left their mark upon it for many centuries to come by their cutting of the aqueducts—a deed that not only deprived Rome of her copious supplies of water, but turned the Campagna into a swamp, and probably increased very notably the ravages of the malarial mosquito. At length the Goths were defeated, and the remnant of their fighting men expelled the country, but the fundamental impotence of the Eastern Empire to hold and govern Italy was shown by the ease with which the next invading wave, the nation of the Lombards, swept in and spread over the peninsula as soon as the backs of Justinian's commanders were turned (568). This very primitive race—the *gens nefandissima* of ecclesiastical writers—fixed its headquarters at Pavia, but sent out strong offshoots to the conquest of the Centre and South, where the Lombard Duchies of Spoleto and Benevento were soon established. The possessions of the Eastern Empire dwindled to certain outposts, garrisoned by Greek troops, and placed under the authority of the Viceroy or Exarch of Ravenna, and the stage was set for the emergence of new forces which, through the twilight of the next five centuries, were slowly to reshape the ancient world.

Of these new forces by far the most vital and progressive was that which informed the Christian Church. Since Constantine's adoption of Christianity as the religion of the State (325) the affairs of the Church had gradually become of absorbing interest to Italy, and especially to Rome, where the absenteeism of the Emperors was compensated by the ever-grow-

ing influence claimed and exercised by the Bishops of Rome. Emerging from the Arian Controversy with an unblemished character for orthodoxy, the Popes were able to confront the barbarian invaders, who were all Arian Christians, with that attitude of superiority which overawed though it did not always convert them; while to the native Roman such events as a disputed Papal election brought the satisfaction of all those innate political instincts which had been too long suppressed under a paternal Empire. If the Italians "had not enough religion to make a heresy," they had, at least, sufficient political sense to make one of the world's greatest institutions, the Catholic Church. And in the first generation after the Lombard Conquest it happened that the Papal Chair was occupied by one of the greatest of Italians, Pope Gregory I. (590-604), who took advantage of the unique situation created by the invasion, to advance the claims of the Papacy to a point never yet attained by his predecessors.

The Lombards, a tribe of pure Teutonic descent, entered Italy not, like the Ostrogoths, with the object of setting up a legitimate rule under the patronage of the Empire, but with the sole purpose of taking the land for themselves and destroying any power that endeavoured to oppose them. They carried on a fierce war for thirty years with the Exarch of Ravenna and his Byzantine forces, and since the Exarch naturally devoted his chief efforts to defending the territories round Ravenna and along the eastern coast, Rome and Naples were left very much to their own resources. Lombard Dukes and Kings harried up to the very walls of Rome, but were there met by the protecting power of Gregory, whose long training as Prefect of Rome and as Nuncio at the Byzantine court had schooled him well in worldly affairs. More far-sighted than the Exarchs, he saw that the Lombards had come to stay, and that the Eastern Empire would never make good its claim to Italy, and his constant

endeavour was to make peace on tolerable terms with the Lombard Kings. Such a policy inevitably brought him into collision with the Eastern court, but facts are hard masters, and the people of Rome and of the vast "patrimonies" of the Church outside it looked gladly to Gregory as their true leader and guide, rather than to the distant and powerless Emperor. His prestige with the Lombards steadily grew, especially through his influence over their Queen Theodelinda, a Bavarian Princess, who as a Catholic laboured hard to bring her adopted people into the orthodox fold. It is said that Gregory sent her, as a mark of his special favour, one of the nails from the True Cross, and that the pious Queen had it beaten into the thin band of iron which gave its name to the "Iron Crown of the Lombards."

So the Lombard power was established in Italy, under a despotic King at Pavia and three semi-independent Dukes of Friuli, Spoleto, and Benevento, and the old Roman life of province and *civitas* sank underground. Probably its own increasing corruption and decay speeded its passing and enabled the new order to take root with the less regret for the old, but in any case no funds were now available for the payment of the old, elaborate hierarchy of Roman officials, and the Lombards quickly established their own authorities in town and countryside. For the conquerors, unlike the Saxons in Roman Britain, were by no means averse from city life and occupied both town and rural estate with equal relish, holding the Roman owners to the soil as *aldii* and exacting one-third of the produce for their own support. Gradually the two races mingled and regarded each other with less aversion, but no conscious attempt was made by the invaders to prolong or give new life to Roman institutions. These, however, still subsisted in the Exarchate, in Rome, and in Naples, and the fairly continuous contact surviving between different parts of Italy must have served to keep alive the memory

of Roman usages, even in regions where the Lombard system became most strongly rooted.

The process of converting the Lombards to Catholicism was completed by the middle of the seventh century, but their dangerous proximity to Rome prevented the growth of any real cordiality between them and the Popes, who looked instead to the growing but distant power of the Franks, now well established in Northern Gaul. In 727 a crisis was precipitated in Italy by the decrees of the Eastern Emperor, Leo the Iconoclast, whose attempt to put down the worship of images led to a fierce rebellion at Ravenna and to the further straining of relations between Empire and Papacy. The Lombard King Liutprand took advantage of the popular ferment to invade the Exarchate and seize Bologna and some of the coast towns, and for the next fifteen years a three-cornered struggle continued between Lombards, Greeks, and Papacy for the possession of these and other territories nearer Rome. Finally Pope Zacharias induced the King to hand over these latter to "Peter, Prince of the Apostles," thus establishing the earliest record of an actual "State of the Church" (742). Ten years later, however, the Lombard King Aistulf seized Ravenna and extinguished the Exarchate, afterwards advancing against Rome with threats of destruction. The Pope, Stephen II., took the desperate resolve of making a personal appeal to Pippin, King of the Franks; journeyed into Gaul, crowned Pippin as King and Patrician—a title which conveyed some vague right of protection over the Holy See—and at Quierzy, near Soissons, made a solemn treaty with him and his fighting men, which has been known ever since as the *Donation of Pippin* (754). By it Pippin undertook to hand over to the "Roman Republic" (*i.e.*, to the Pope) the Exarchate of Ravenna and all other territories which Aistulf had wrongfully seized. The promise was fulfilled two years later, and the envoys sent by the Eastern Emperor to demand the restora-

tion of the Exarchate to him found that their pleadings fell on deaf ears. The power of the Eastern Empire on the Italian mainland was henceforth reduced to the possession of the "Duchy of Naples" and to certain portions of Apulia and Calabria.

The work of the Franks in Italy, however, was not yet ended, for the Lombards raised their heads once more, and it needed the intervention of a greater man than Pippin—his son, Charlemagne—to master them completely. In 774, in response to another Papal appeal, Charles descended into Italy, defeated and captured the last Lombard King, and himself took the title of *Rex Francorum et Langobardorum et Patricius Romanorum*. He visited Rome and confirmed the Donation of his father Pippin to the Church. The Lombard Counts and *Gastalds* in the towns were replaced by Franks, and only in the south did the vast Duchy of Benevento remain unsubdued. But even this was not enough. Twenty-five years later, Leo III., fleeing from the turbulence of Rome itself, came as a suppliant to find the Frankish King in Westphalia (799), and Charles agreed to follow him to Rome. How far the memorable event that then occurred had been prepared between the two, or what exactly was its significance to those concerned, will never be known, so meagre are the accounts of contemporary chroniclers; but the fact remains that on Christmas Day of the year 800, in the Basilica of St. Pèter's, Pope Leo crowned the Frankish King as Augustus and Imperator. The Romans hailed his coronation with a mighty shout, and the Pope knelt in "adoration" at his feet. He could afford the act of homage, for had he not transformed to the service of the Church the greatest institution of the ancient world? A Frankish King might be proclaimed Roman Emperor, but to make his rule legitimate the Vicar of Christ must crown him. From that latent antithesis sprang the two master-currents that were to shape the life of the Italian Middle Ages.

CHAPTER II

*FRANKS, LOMBARDS, AND NORMANS, TO
THE DEATH OF GREGORY VII.*

(800—1085)

WITH the death of Charles the Great in 814, the forces of disorder which his strong presence had held in check for a time surged up again throughout his wide dominions. His descendants waged continual war upon one another, and although there was always, until their extinction in 888, one who bore the title of King of Italy, and was sometimes crowned Emperor as well, none of them were able to impose their will over more than a fraction of the Peninsula. Under these conditions the Lombard Counts and Dukes regained their power, so that by the end of the ninth century their great house of Spoleto was threatening to overshadow all other authorities and to bring back the Lombard Kingdom. But the Lombard character for pugnacity and internecine strife prevented the renewal of any permanent form of kingship, while the feudal tenures brought in by the Franks only increased the general confusion. Add to this that the ninth century saw the irresistible advance of the Saracens from North Africa into Sicily and Southern Italy, profiting by the disunion between Greeks and Lombards throughout those regions, and the distracted condition of Italy will be understood. This, however, is the time of the emergence of the maritime republics of Naples, Amalfi, and Gaëta, which thrived on sea-warfare with the Saracens and maintained their independence against the Lombard Dukes of Benevento and Salerno; while in the north-east corner of Italy, Venice had already passed through her first supreme test, in repulsing a determined attempt of the Franks against her in 810; had stolen the body of St. Mark from Alexandria (829), and had established the seat of

her government on that cluster of little islands in the midst of the lagoon which were then known as Rivus Altus or *Rialto*. In spite of the constant danger from Saracen fleets and pirates, the commerce of these sea-republics appears to have prospered during the ninth century, nor were they above an occasional alliance with the infidel, as when the Neapolitan fleet rendered decisive aid to the Saracens against the Byzantine garrison of Messina in 843. But when, a little later, the Saracens actually sailed up the Tiber and plundered the Basilica of St. Peter at their leisure, the common pride of Christendom was outraged and the sea-republics combined to inflict a crushing defeat on the infidel off Ostia in 849. And the stout-hearted Pope, Leo IV., pushed on the work of building a massive wall, known ever afterwards as the *Leonine*, around St. Peter's and the Borgo, to preserve the central shrine of Christendom from further insult. The Saracens, however, remained entrenched in many fortified posts of the South, especially on the river Garigliano, whence they constantly issued to take service with this or that Lombard Duke or to lay waste the Papal territories. In Sicily their conquest of the island was complete by the year 878 and the Byzantine garrison expelled. Only portions of Apulia and Calabria, with a shadowy suzerainty over the maritime republics, now remained to the Eastern Empire of all the conquests of Justinian.

The revival of the Lombard power reached its climax in the reigns of the two Dukes of Spoleto, Guy and Lambert, towards the end of the ninth century, and in that of Berengar of Friuli in the first quarter of the tenth; all of these were crowned King of Italy and Emperor by subservient Popes, and the last-named did good service by his incessant struggles against the Hungarian invaders who poured into Italy in the first years of the tenth century. His success, however, was only partial, and the advance of these wandering hordes of savages over the Lombard

plain caused the cities themselves to look to their defences and to form the first germs of a civic militia. Against the Saracens the fighting Pope, John X., organised a league between the nobles of Rome and all the diverse elements of the South, and himself led the Roman militia to the attack on their entrenched camp beside the Garigliano. The Moslems were overpowered, and the year 915 marks the end of the Saracen threat to Rome which had endured for nearly a century.

In spite of the occasional appearance of a Carolingian Emperor or of a Lombard "King of Italy" in Rome, the eternal city had enjoyed a practical independence throughout the ninth century, and appears to have accepted without demur the rule of the Popes. This tendency was repeated in Northern Italy through the increasing powers conferred on the Bishops by the Frankish and Lombard Kings, who seem to have preferred the ecclesiastical authority to that of their own feudal Counts. Numerous charters of this date grant to the Bishops the right to levy taxes and to erect walls and fortifications round the towns—an indication of the declining power of the Counts and Gastalds and of the increasing self-reliance of the citizens. But in Rome the tenth century saw the beginnings of an antagonism between town and Papacy in the remarkable episode of the Senator Alberic, who called the citizens to arms against his dissolute mother, Marozia—the mistress of one Pope and the mother of a second—and ruled for two-and-twenty years as *Princeps ac Senator omnium Romanorum*, creating a succession of docile Popes and depriving them of all temporal power (932-954). He roused the civic spirit of the Romans by organising the city militia in twelve regiments corresponding to the ancient "regions" of the city, and taught them to fight in many bloody encounters with the partisans of the King of Italy of the day. With the help of the Abbot of Cluny he carried out a much-needed reform of the Benedictine

monasteries throughout the Roman territory, and left to posterity a monument to his activities in the Priory of Malta on the Aventine, which had originally been his palace. He lived to defy the great Saxon King, Otto I., when the latter came on his first journey to Rome in 951, and only after Alberic's death was it possible for this Transalpine Prince to pursue his ambitious scheme for the revival of the Empire of Charlemagne.

For the anarchical condition of the country, and the invitation of a Pope, led once more, about the middle of the tenth century, to the intervention of a strong foreign King in the affairs of Italy. Otto the Great came, like Charlemagne, to chastise a Lombard King (Berengar II.), but, once involved in the vortex of Italian politics, he endeavoured to give a more permanent organisation to the Imperial power, and especially to regulate its relations with the Papacy. Here, however, he found himself in unexpected conflict with the Roman people, who thrice rebelled against him or his Papal nominee, and had to be suppressed with the utmost severity (962-966). Otto had revived a claim made by a grandson of Charlemagne in 824, that although the Pope might be *elected* by the clergy and people of Rome, he must not be consecrated without the Emperor's approval; indeed, he went further, and insisted that no Pope should even be elected without his consent, and so long as he lived succeeded in enforcing the condition. But it needed the spectacle of a Prefect of the City hanging by the hair of his head from the statue of Marcus Aurelius before the Romans would accept the Saxon tutelage. In the affairs of the country at large, however, Otto contributed to its pacification by his suppression of the last Lombard King, Berengar II., and by the encouragement he gave to the policy of granting charters of municipal sovereignty to the Bishops. Since at the same time he insisted on appointing the Bishops himself, this gave him a far surer hold upon the towns than when these were in the hands of hereditary

Counts. The Counts appear to have become relegated more and more to the countryside, so that the seeds were now sown of the future antagonism between nobles and burghers that was to be so marked a sign of the rise of the communes. But during the reigns of the three Ottos the rule of the Bishops procured a breathing-space for the towns, during which they increased in security and wealth and began to form the urban constitutions which developed later into the full-blown city-states.

Otto the Great remained in Italy for six years after his chastisement of the Romans in 966, and made a determined attempt not only to extend his rule over the south, but also to obtain recognition for it from the Eastern Empire, which had never yet deigned to acknowledge the new "Empire of the West." In this he was so far successful as to win the hand of a Byzantine Princess for his son Otto II., and to extend his suzerainty over the Duchy of Benevento; but although he made peace with the Emperor John Zimisce, it is probable that he failed to achieve any direct admission of his claim to the Empire. His son Otto spent the best part of his short life in fighting the Saracens of the South and suffered a signal defeat at their hands; but he died at the age of twenty-eight, leaving his titles and pretensions to his infant son, Otto III., during whose long minority the spirit of independence broke forth again in Rome. Another leader of the people arose in the person of the Patrician Crescentius, who ruled the city after the manner of Alberic, but when the young Otto at length reached Rome and endeavoured to reform the Papacy by placing a German idealist on the Papal throne, the inevitable collision occurred, and Crescentius was beheaded on the battlements of the Castle of St. Angelo (998). Otto was filled with mystic dreams for restoring the glory of the Roman Empire, but he had no constancy of purpose, and wavered between a longing to avenge his father by a campaign against the Saracens and the

delight of listening to the saintly converse of hermits like St. Nilus of Gaëta and St. Romuald of Ravenna. In 1001 he paid a secret visit to Venice, already the strongest sea-power in the Adriatic, in order to discuss with the Doge the possibility of an expedition against the infidels of the South. But he died in the next year, leaving Rome to follow the path of independence for another forty years.

While in the South the early years of the eleventh century saw the coming of the first roving bands of Norman adventurers who were at length to unite Southern Italy and Sicily in a compact feudal kingdom, and in Rome the Papacy sank again to be the sport of contending families and factions, in the great plain of the North the rising spirit of the cities made rapid strides and led, by the middle of the century, to the renowned hegemony of Milan. Here the period of the Ottos had brought peace and wealth to this, the most industrious mart of Lombardy, and Otto the Great had recognised its importance by receiving, in Sant' Ambrogio, the Iron Crown of the Lombards from the hands of its Archbishop. Now, from 1018 to 1045, the See was filled by one of those born leaders whom the Middle Ages threw up with such exuberance, the great Archbishop Heribert, whose invention of the *Carroccio*, or sacred car of the commune, was to be adopted throughout the North and Centre and to give the needed symbol to reinforce the new-found strength of the cities. Heribert represented the class of feudal aristocrats whom the Emperors had made their vassals-in-chief, and who by this date filled most of the Bishoprics of Italy, and since they in their turn had numbers of vassals in the districts outside the city walls, their military strength had become almost as formidable as that of the greater Counts and Marquises. Heribert's principal support, however, lay in the fighting spirit which he aroused in the populace of Milan. This was shown first in the punitive expeditions which he made against the neighbouring towns

of Pavia and Lodi—ominous foreshadowings of the inter-communal wars of the next century—and next in his victorious resistance to the Emperor Conrad, when the latter sought to curb the pretensions of his too powerful vassal. Though he had himself invited and crowned Conrad in 1026, he now repulsed him from the walls of Milan and sent him defeated back to Germany (1037). But Heribert was already aware of disunion among the Milanese themselves, and his own last years were embittered by a furious struggle waged by the minor vassals and the populace against the nobles whose order he represented. This struggle became merged after his death in something still more significant—a passionate religious unrest which, first taking the form of a revolt against the worldliness and luxury of the Milanese clergy, passed on to take up the cry that came at length from Rome—against the two sins of simony and clerical marriage. The Milanese or Ambrosian Church had always cherished with special affection the rule which it had inherited from St. Ambrose sanctioning the marriage of priests, while as to simony, the buying and selling of clerical offices had become as much a matter of course as the traffic in any other feudal estate, for which regular fees were paid. But now at length the voice of austerity was in the ascendant, for in Rome a reaction had set in against the scandalous Papacy that had followed on the Ottonian epoch. Once more a Transalpine reformer had descended, in the person of the Emperor Henry III., and had swept away the three Popes who were holding the three great basilicas of Rome with rival forces (1045); a self-respecting Papacy had been set up, and after the first two or three nominees of the Emperor had passed away a movement of protest had commenced against the control exercised by the German sovereign over the Papal elections. The inspiring genius of this movement was the Tuscan monk Hildebrand, who became chaplain to successive Popes and at length Archdeacon of Rome under

Nicholas II. It was under this Pope that the famous Lateran Council was summoned in 1059, which laid down the rule that the Pope was in future to be elected only by the Cardinal-bishops and Cardinal-priests of the Roman territory, though with some vague reservation of the rights of the Emperor. Whether Hildebrand was actually responsible for the decree or not is still a matter of controversy, but he was certainly deeply involved in the larger campaign against simony and clerical marriage. He twice visited Milan as Papal Legate and bearded Heribert's successor, Archbishop Guido, in his own citadel; but in spite of the revolutionary ferment among the Milanese it was remarkable that whenever Rome sought to interfere, local patriotism at once awoke to strengthen the Archbishop's hands. In the end, however, Guido was forced to visit Rome and receive investiture from the Pope, but, wearied out by the furious faction-strife in the streets and churches of Milan, he presently resigned and left the See in vacancy for some years.

Meanwhile the political genius of Hildebrand had seen to it that the Papal Chair should not lack worldly support in the struggle which he foresaw with the Empire on the question of investiture. To the north of Rome he made alliance with the powerful Marquis of Tuscany, whose vast possessions stretched well beyond the Apennines into the plain of the Po, and to the south he patronised the rising power of the Normans, to whose leader, Robert Guiscard, Pope Leo IX. had granted the investiture of all future conquests in 1053, making no mention of the rights either of the Eastern or the Western Empire. The Normans accepted with alacrity the rôle of protectors of the Papal See, which was to bring them so much honour and profit in the future.

Fortunately for the reformers, the long minority of Henry IV., son of Henry III., gave them time to consolidate their position, but when at length Hildebrand himself ascended the Papal Chair in 1073, as Gregory VII., Henry IV. was of full age and soon

showed that he was not disposed to submit to the new doctrine of the sinfulness of lay appointments to clerical offices. He had already made his own appointment to the Archbishopric of Milan and to two other Italian Sees, and when Gregory summoned him to Rome to answer for his offences, Henry convened a Council of German Bishops at Worms and hurled a decree of deposition against the Pope. But Gregory met ban with ban, not only excommunicating the King, but deposing him as well and releasing his subjects from their oath of allegiance (1076). Germany staggered at the unheard-of sentence, but it had its effect, and Henry was plainly told that he must obtain absolution within the year if he wished to keep his throne. Then followed the deep humiliation of Canossa, when Gregory, secure in the mountain stronghold of the Countess Matilda of Tuscany, refused admission for three days to the King standing barefoot without, and in the end granted him absolution only, with no word of reinstatement (January, 1077). But in the civil war that followed Henry defeated his enemies, and by the spring of 1081 was moving upon Rome, with an Anti-Pope elected by the German Bishops in his train. Rome at first held out for Gregory, but when all efforts at reconciliation proved fruitless, the magistrates invited Henry to take possession, and while Gregory remained shut up in the Castle of St. Angelo, the King caused his Anti-Pope to be consecrated as Clement III. and then passed to his own Imperial coronation in St. Peter's. But by this time Gregory's messengers had found the Norman Duke, Robert Guiscard, who now hastened to his suzerain's support. While Henry, with his small force, retreated northwards, Normans and Saracens to the number of 36,000 poured in upon defenceless Rome. They burnt the whole quarter between the Lateran and the Colosseum, so that it lay waste for centuries, and when at length Guiscard called them off they were obliged to carry Gregory with them, for

Rome would have him no more. He died at Salerno a year later (1085), giving with his last breath a tragic turn to the words of the Psalmist: "I have loved righteousness and hated iniquity: Therefore I die in exile."

CHAPTER III

THE CITIES OF NORTHERN ITALY AND THE HOUSE OF HOHENSTAUFEN

(1085—1250)

WHILE the struggle over the right of investiture continued for another generation after the death of Gregory VII., and Pope or Anti-Pope passed, according to the strength or weakness of the Imperial party, across the troubled stage of Rome, the cities of the North and Centre took advantage of the quarrel to develop their own municipal independence. At the same time a new movement arose appealing to all the strongest instincts of the seaport towns, and opening to them an unlimited prospect of trade, adventure, and conquest in the East. Urban II. preached the First Crusade in 1095, and Venice, Genoa, and Pisa at once took their part both in the conveyance and the fighting, seizing whole towns, or quarters of towns, in Palestine as their share of the booty, and often coming into collision with the Greeks and with each other on their way to the Holy Land. Throughout the twelfth century, indeed, Venice was frequently at war, in addition to her crusading ventures, either with the Greeks or with the Normans, who, under their two great Kings, Roger I. and II., had won Sicily from the Saracens and Apulia from the Greeks, and had become a formidable third power in the Adriatic. But, in spite of occasional defeats, the power of Venice was in the ascendant, so that by the end of the century her assistance was considered indispensable in any further effort against the Saracens of Palestine. In

the memorable enterprise of Western Christendom, known as the Fourth Crusade (1201-1204), Venice was the predominant partner, and Venice suffered herself to be dazzled by the promises of a Greek pretender, and so to turn the armament against Constantinople as a step to the conquest of the East. By the siege and sack of the capital of Eastern Christendom in 1204, the "Franks" earned little glory in the eyes of posterity, but Venice became the mistress of an empire. Crete and the Greek Islands, with portions of the Morea and of Eubœa, fell into her hands, and henceforth her Doges styled themselves: "Despot and Lord of one quarter and half a quarter of the Roman Empire."

The peculiar constitution of Venice, with Doge, Ducal Councillors, and Great Council, had already been elaborated in all its main features by this date, but her isolation from the mainland had given her, in many respects, a different development from that of the typical cities of Northern and Central Italy. These acquired the free constitutions that have made them famous, largely as a result of the War of Investitures, which, by producing so many disputed elections to the Bishoprics, weakened the power of the Bishops and caused the cities to provide for their own safety by the election of *Consuls*. The first mention of Consuls at Milan occurs in a document of 1107, but the tendency towards civic independence was undoubtedly accelerated by the strange will of the Countess Matilda of Tuscany, the old *dévôte* who had sheltered Gregory VII. at Canossa, and who now left the whole of her vast possessions to the Church, including the lands which she held only as a life tenant from the Empire (1115). The flames of discord blazed up afresh over this bequest, and in the confusion caused by the rival claims of Imperial and Papal vicars, the cities seized their opportunity and confronted both with the accomplished fact of a consular organisation. Florence dated her first consular government from the year of Matilda's death, and, although

the War of Investitures was ended in 1122 by the well-known Concordat of Worms, the settlement came too late to avert the democratic tendency. The growing trade of the Lombard and Tuscan towns added another potent influence for independence, for the great Arts, or Guilds, were already arising, and it is frequently the Consuls of the Guilds that become also the Consuls of the Commune.

But in Italy it was fated that no peaceful development should attend the rise of the spirit of liberty in the city-states. We have already noted the first efforts of Milan to dominate her lesser neighbours by force, and, as the twelfth century proceeded, these interne-cine struggles between the cities became ever more acute. There were long and bloody wars of many years' duration that frequently involved the total demolition of the weaker town and the parcelling out of its inhabitants among open villages. Many causes go to explain the endless pugnacity of the Lombard Communes: the absence of any strong controlling power to whose interest it was to keep the cities in continuous subordination to a central state; the presence, instead, of an occasional irruptive force, the Imperial authority, which only aggravated existing discords when it made its appearance, and threw the cities into the arms of the other and mightier authority, the Roman Church; and, finally, some hidden spring of youth and energy, never wholly explicable, which had lain sleeping through the dark centuries of change and incubation and now burst into arrogant and creative life. In the heyday of its strength this force came into violent collision with the typical feudal forces of the Middle Ages embodied in the Teutonic Emperor Frederick of Hohenstaufen (surnamed Barbarossa by the Italians), and suffered defeat at first owing to its fatal divisions; but when adversity had schooled it, it showed that it was in the end invincible. For twenty-two years, from 1154 to 1176, the war between Frederick and the Cities raged—pro-

voked in the first instance by the bitter complaints against Milan of two exiled citizens of Lodi who made their way to the Diet of Constance in 1153. Milan was always the head and front of the resistance. Twice was she besieged by Frederick's whole army, which included the militias of all the cities she had provoked to deadly feud, and when, at length, she had surrendered at discretion and Frederick had pronounced judgment upon her, it was the men of those cities who leapt upon her walls, tore them down to their foundations, and set fire to the city within (1162). But behind the resistance of the burghers there presently arose the figure of the Pope, thrown into secular opposition once more to the German Emperor-King. At Frederick's first coming in 1154, Pope and Emperor had combined for a moment against an outbreak of the Republican spirit of Rome, led by the prophet Arnold of Brescia; but the alliance was an unnatural one, and when the danger was laid by the sacrifice of Arnold, the two parties to it drifted apart once more. At the crisis of the Lombard War, a new Pope, Alexander III., though exiled from Rome by the Emperor's partisans, sustained the flagging spirits of the Cities, and it was with his blessing that they formed in secret the celebrated Lombard League (1167). At length all the towns which had at first taken Frederick's part—with the exception of Pavia the old centre of Lombard royalty—had adhered to the League, and solemnly the walls of Milan were rebuilt as its first symbolic act. Frederick was detained in Germany for some years at this period, but in May, 1176, the two armies marched to their final clash at the Battle of Legnano. Little is told us of the tactics pursued by rival commanders or of the weapons used in that memorable fight, but the Carroccio of Milan formed the centre of the burgher host, and the guards of the Carroccio gave no ground. At nightfall, Frederick had lost all and the citizen companies stood victorious on the field. There followed the famous

reconciliation at Venice—Venice chosen by both sides because she had shrewdly supported both at different stages of the war—whereat the Emperor humbled himself before Pope Alexander, and acknowledged the Cities' right to *elect* their Consuls, saving his own claim to invest them afterwards (1177). The settlement suited both sides, and in his latter years Frederick even cultivated the society of the Milanese, where streets and palaces had sprung up again as if by magic since the great destruction.

It was at Milan, in fact, that the old Emperor attained the crown of his ambition by marrying his son Henry to Constance, heiress of the Norman Kings of Sicily (1186). The Norman dynasty, consisting of but four Kings, covering the best part of the twelfth century, had brought Sicily and Southern Italy up to an astonishingly high level of civilisation, by the simple but then almost unknown device of tolerating all races and religions on a footing of equality. In Palermo—which was said to number 300,000 souls—the learning of the East met the nascent inquiry of the West, and throughout the kingdom trade and commerce flourished prodigiously, so that the last King, William the Good, was able to send out fleets of 200 sail to assert his might in the wars of Constantinople, of Palestine, or of Egypt. But, having no son, he consented, though sorely against the advice of his more far-seeing ministers, to the marriage above-mentioned, thereby subjecting South as well as North to German hegemony: a highly unstable arrangement which presently incurred the deadly hostility of the Popes, and brought down upon the Southern Kingdom the curse of foreign conquest and enslavement.

But for a time the anxieties of the Pope slumbered, for Henry VI. had but a brief career (1190-1197), and at his death the strong German rule he had built up in Central Italy crumbled to pieces. His widow, dying in the next year, left the guardianship of his infant

son Frederick to the Pope himself, the great Pope Innocent III., and so fastened the suzerainty of the Church more firmly upon the Southern Kingdom. While the youth of the most fascinating ruler of the Middle Ages was spent at Palermo, in the free atmosphere of Arab wisdom, Greek philosophy, and Christian dialectics, Innocent was able to re-establish the power of the Papacy in Rome and the Patrimony of St. Peter, where native and German barons defied him from fortified towns and castles, and the Senate which Arnold of Brescia had re-vivified arrogated to itself the right of ruling Rome. Little by little Innocent attained his object, until the Donation of Pippin, which had long been a mere memory, became almost an accomplished fact, and even the Romans forgot their Republican traditions for a time by accepting the rule of a single Senator appointed by the Pope. More significant still, Innocent III., confronted by the still seething heresy of Lombardy, harnessed to the service of the Church a similar but sweeter force, the genius of St. Francis of Assisi. By authorising the foundation of the Franciscan Order, Innocent let loose upon the mediæval world the doctrines of poverty and love, and by so doing enlisted the common people on the Church's side in the supreme encounter between Empire and Papacy.

For the last serious effort of the Mediæval Empire to dominate Italy was to be made by Barbarossa's grandson, this youthful Frederick who had imbibed the civilisation of the South under his Arab tutors at Palermo. But in the fifty years that had elapsed between his grandfather's wars and his own, the aspect of affairs had greatly changed in Lombardy, or rather the eternal strife of the Lombard cities had taken a new note. The struggle is now not so much a simple one between town and town as a blindly revolving strife between the victorious burghers of the towns and the feudal barons of the countryside, whom they had subdued and forced to live within the city

walls. The barons made ill citizens in the towns of their adoption, and in the frequent broils and expulsions which their arrogance provoked, they knew that they already stood allied with all the enemies of their coercing city. And when in the first ten years of the thirteenth century the accidental adoption of two German names—the one from a castle of the Hohenstaufen, Waiblingen, the other from the rival family of Welf, or Guelf—gave a rallying cry to the partisans of Emperor and Pope, these social divisions found themselves caught up in the fatal antagonism that dominated everything in Italy. Thus, wherever the majority of the coercing city was Guelf or Papalist, the nobles would be Ghibelline, and vice versa. On the whole, the nobles were mainly Ghibelline and the towns mainly Guelf, but there were some notable exceptions, such as Pavia, Cremona, and Pisa, which always maintained Imperialist affections, and whose recalcitrant nobles were, therefore, Guelf.

In this highly inflammable atmosphere the only wonder was that the final blaze was deferred for so long. But Frederick II. was occupied for the first twenty years of his reign in consolidating his position in Germany, in conducting his remarkable crusading enterprise in the East, in the face of three Papal excommunications (1227-1230), and in attending to the affairs of his favourite possessions, Sicily and Apulia. There he continued the work of the Norman Kings by curbing the power of the barons, encouraging learning by the foundation of the University of Naples, and attracting to his court the wandering scholars and poets that made of it the seed-bed of Italian literature. By his codification of the Lombard and Norman Laws in the *Constitutions of Melfi* (1231) and the appointment of royal judges, he did what in him lay to promote the reign of law and justice. But he was called away from his Southern Kingdom in 1235 by the revolt of one of his sons in Germany, and was there joined by the evil genius of his later years, one

Ezzelino da Romano, prototype of all that was most repulsive in the Italian despot of the next century. By his counsel Frederick resolved on war with the Lombard Cities, where Milan had taken up the cause of his rebellious son, and where the Lombard League had been renewed against him, in a passive sense, some years before. For fourteen years Northern Italy was laid waste by a cruel and bitter war, in which Frederick employed his Saracen warriors from the South, his German chivalry, and his Ghibelline partisans, and the Cities displayed an admirable heroism, sustained throughout by the spiriual thunders of the Popes. Excommunicated by Gregory IX., excommunicated and deposed by Innocent IV. and the Council of Lyons (1245), his life conspired against by his Apulian barons, his camp beaten up by the Parmesans and his favourite son taken captive by the Bolognese, Frederick still made head against his fate; but the long strain wore out his bodily powers, and he died at last in the year 1250, at one of his southern castles. With him collapsed the long-drawn effort of Germany to hold sway in the Italian peninsula. But not for that was Italy to enjoy a development untroubled by foreign invasion. It was now to be the turn of France.

CHAPTER IV

CHARLES OF ANJOU—THE RISE OF FLORENCE AND OF THE TYRANNIES —THE EXILE AND RETURN OF THE PAPACY

(1265—1377)

WITHIN sixteen years after the death of Frederick II., the inveterate hostility of the Popes to the "brood of vipers," as they openly termed his offspring, had cut short the reign of his brilliant son Manfred in

Sicily and Naples and let in a horde of French adventurers upon those regions, under Charles of Anjou, brother of St. Louis. This revolution in the affairs of Italy—for it was nothing less—was partly due to the fact that a Frenchman, Urban IV., was elected to the Papal Chair in 1261, but partly also to the too great success of Manfred in carrying on the policy of his father and in giving a lead to the Ghibelline party throughout Italy. Portrayed for all time in Dante's single line—"Biondo era e bello e di gentile aspetto"—Manfred, whose mother was Italian, had given some hope of the development of a national dynasty in the South, independent of the German line; but he was killed by the Pope's crusaders in a battle outside the walls of Benevento and his widow and four sons immured for life in the conqueror's dungeons (1266). All further resistance to the march of Charles of Anjou collapsed with his death, and within two years Charles was master of the whole Kingdom. He decided to take up his own residence at Naples instead of at Palermo, and the vast and forbidding Castel Nuovo is there the principal monument of his reign. So oppressive, however, was his rule and so bitter the hatred against his needy followers, who spread themselves like a swarm of locusts over the unhappy land, that it was only on the mainland that he succeeded in establishing his dynasty. In Sicily the violent uprising at Palermo, known as the Sicilian Vespers (1282), followed by a massacre of the French throughout the island, put an end to his dominion there, for the Sicilians offered the crown to King Peter of Aragon, who had married Manfred's daughter, and all the efforts of Angevins and Popes together failed to drive him out. At length in 1302 his son Frederick was recognised by Boniface VIII. as King of Trinacria, and throughout the fourteenth century Sicily enjoyed a considerable prosperity under the Aragonese dynasty, who encouraged the development of the native Parliament and ruled largely by its means.

But on the mainland Charles of Anjou, an able and unscrupulous tyrant, prospered in all his undertakings, and as Manfred had sustained the Ghibellines of Upper Italy, so Charles sustained the Guelfs. A typical instance of the action and reaction of these greater forces upon the fortunes of individual cities may be seen in the case of Florence, which, as we saw, had enjoyed a consular government ever since the death of the Countess Matilda in 1115. Florence had increased greatly in wealth and prosperity throughout the twelfth century, owing principally to the steady development of her great cloth-making industry. In 1193 she had adopted, in addition to her Consuls, the expedient of the "Head of the State," or Podestà, an official elected for one year only and always imported from another city, so as to secure impartiality. He acted both as supreme magistrate and as commander of the communal army, but his power was strictly limited by his Council, into which the Consuls were gradually transformed, and by the rule that at the end of his year of office he was obliged to remain in the city for fifty days to answer all charges against his administration. This curious institution became characteristic of all the Italian communes at this time, and testified, no doubt, to the need for greater executive efficiency. At Florence, just as acutely as elsewhere, the divisions of Guelf and Ghibelline had crept in, representing the jealousy of the burgher class against the proud and unruly nobles who had been brought in and forced to live within the city walls, and the wars of Frederick, Manfred, and Charles had all affected her in turn. In 1249 Florence had been seized and held to ransom by one of Frederick's sons, but on the Emperor's death she had shaken herself free and had established a popular and democratic government with a new official known as the Captain of the People, and a strong bias against the noble or Ghibelline element in her constitution (1250). A violent explosion even expelled the Ghibellines, who went to take refuge at Siena and, obtaining

help from Manfred, fell upon the Florentine army as it went slowly forth to meet them and gained over it the crushing victory of Montaperto (1260). The proud city was humbled to the dust, and narrowly escaped the destruction that had fallen on Milan. It is said that she was saved only by the intercession of Farinata, one of her exiled Ghibelline chiefs.

But with the coming of Charles of Anjou the tables were turned once more in Tuscany. The Guelfs of Florence returned to power and a new central Government, formed by the six Priors of the Arts or Guilds, with their Council, took its place between the existing Councils of the Podestà and of the Captain (1282). Extraordinarily severe enactments against the noble class, whether Guelf or Ghibelline, followed in 1292, but the rich Geulf nobles bided their time, and taking advantage of the passage of a French Prince in 1301, whom a Pope had called in against the Aragonese in Sicily, they led a popular rising against the moderate bourgeoisie, fastened the suspicion of Ghibellinism upon them and cast many hundreds of them out into exile. In the long roll of those banished under pain of death should they return, occurs the name of Dante Alighieri. But in spite of these civil tumults, Florence held fast to the principle of popular government and throughout the fourteenth century escaped the fate which had by this time overtaken almost all the other cities of the North and Centre—that of the rule of a *Signor* or Lord as the only alternative to the endless party strife. One or two experiments in that direction only increased her abhorrence of despotism, and, in 1343, after the brief signory of a French soldier of fortune who bore the romantic title of Duke of Athens, a furious rising of the people against the nobles who had supported him finally shattered their power and prepared the way for the entry of the lower classes, organised in the Minor Guilds, to political power. Meanwhile, simultaneously with this exuberant life of the Piazza, the glory of Florence in art and architec-

ture had been steadily growing. This was the period of the building of the Campanile, the Cathedral, Sta. Maria Novella, the Palazzo Vecchio, the Bargello, and the Gothic palaces of the nobles that frowned at each other across the narrow streets—and also of the first outpouring of an immortal literature in the Italian language. Small wonder that the Florentines felt all the glow of national pride and fondly spoke of their Republic as the “eldest daughter of Rome.”

But in the other great cities of Northern and Central Italy the fifty years that followed the death of Frederick II. formed the transition stage for the emergence of those native despotisms which were to become the full-blown “Signories” of the fourteenth century. The unending strife of Guelf and Ghibelline, involving massacres, expulsions, and confiscations on an unheard-of scale, and usually revolving round the animosities of rival families and clans, filled these years with clamour, until one after another the cities gladly welcomed the sway of some fortunate “Captain of the People” who arose from the chaos and on whom they bestowed their “Signory” either for life or for a limited time. He was usually strong enough to recall the exiles and to impose internal peace on the exhausted state. Frequently there was a period of oscillation between two rival families, the one Guelf, the other Ghibelline, and it was remarkable that at Milan, the ancient stronghold of the Guelfs, it was the Ghibelline clan of the Visconti that eventually rose victorious (1310). At Ferrara, on the other hand, the Guelf house of Este founded a supremacy that was to endure for three and a half centuries (till 1598); at Mantua the Ghibelline Gonzaga at length emerged (1328) and founded a permanent dynasty, while at Verona the people hailed as their “Perpetual Captain” a popular leader named Della Scala, from whom sprang the brilliant Scaliger line. All these citizen-princes ruled as pure despots, perhaps respecting the Republican forms, but filling the Councils with nominees.

of their own and resting on the arms of mercenary soldiers; for it was to their interest to discourage citizen armies, whose loyalty was not always to be trusted. Thus the proud liberty of the Italian communes decayed, but prosperity increased, for the Prince encouraged industry and commerce, fostered art, and by gradually extending his dominion over the neighbouring towns broke down vexatious barriers to trade, thereby increasing his own revenues and the security of his subjects. The Age of the Despots, with all its brilliance, its civilisation, and its crimes, was a typical product of the genius of the Italian people of that day, and since it made for the absorption of the weaker cities by the stronger it also promoted the political consolidation of the country. Gradually a balance of power was attained between the five greater states: Naples, Rome, Florence, Milan, and Venice, with Ferrara, Mantua, and Genoa as attendant satellites.

The development of these independent princedoms was powerfully assisted by the fact that during the fourteenth century Italy was neglected both by Empire and Papacy. Only two Emperors, Henry of Luxemburg and Louis of Bavaria, made brief descents, and by an extraordinary chain of circumstances the Papacy itself submitted to a voluntary exile from Rome and went into "Babylonish Captivity" in the Provençal city of Aragon. This was the result of the turbulent reign of Boniface VIII., Dante's great enemy (1294-1303), who as Cardinal had encouraged the abdication of his predecessor, the poor saintly hermit, Celestine V. Dante branded with a bitter word the soul of him who made the *gran rifiuto*, and reserved a place in Hell, in the Pits of the Simonists, for his supplanter, Boniface. In terrestrial matters, Boniface was the Pope who, after carrying on a furious vendetta against the great Colonna family and razing their stronghold of Palestrina to the ground, called in the French Prince above-mentioned (Charles of Valois) to settle the affairs of Florence and of Sicily, and was thus responsible for

the tragic events in Florence that led to Dante's banishment. But it was his quarrel with Philip IV. of France that finally brought down the great catastrophe upon himself and on the Papacy. Bulls and threats of excommunication on Boniface's part had alternated with defiances from the King and the Three Estates for seven years, till at length Philip, egged on by the Colonna exiles who haunted his court, planned an audacious attempt to kidnap the Pope and bring him by force before a Council of the Church at Lyons. Sciarra Colonna and a party of French and Italian men-at-arms actually beat up the Pope's summer quarters at Anagni, but, daunted by the fearless behaviour of the old man, dared not carry out their threat and let time slip until a rescue party of the Orsini—secular rivals of the Colonna—rode in from Rome (Sept., 1303). The Pope returned under their escort, but the shock of Philip's outrage had so eaten into his soul that he died mysteriously a month later. A weak and short-lived Pope followed him for a few months, but on his death in 1304 a French Cardinal was elected who took the view (probably dictated by King Philip) that Rome was unsafe as a Papal residence and established his abode at Avignon instead. There an uninterrupted succession of French Popes carried on their reigns, in moral subjection to the Kings of France and to the Angevin Kings of Naples (to whom Avignon belonged) until in 1377 the preaching of St. Catherine of Siena and the desperate state of Papal affairs in Italy procured at length a return to deserted Rome.

The condition of Rome itself during this period was one of abject misery and degradation, for the incessant feuds of the robber barons—Colonna, Orsini, and Savelli—kept the city in a state of continual anarchy, while the absence of the Papal court brought ruin to its trade. The curious episode of Rienzi's revolt against the Barons (1347 and 1354) is only significant as showing how, ever and anon, the Re-

publican spirit of Rome could be kindled to fiery action, but Rienzi himself was no statesman and achieved nothing permanent except the slaughter of a large number of the Colonna and Orsini. This, however, left the way clear to a better state of things, for the nobles never again attained to such unbridled power, and the latter part of the Babylonish Captivity is the period when the mediæval Republic of Rome, with its Conservators and Guild of Archers, attains its highest development. It was created by the Romans themselves, but confirmed by the great Cardinal d'Albornoz, who was sent to Italy in 1353 to reclaim and reorganise the Papal State. Albornoz subdued the scores of petty tyrants who, since the fall of Boniface VIII., had sprung up in Tuscany, Umbria, and the region north of the Apennines which, representing the old Exarchate, now began to be called *Romagna*—and encouraged the formation of civic constitutions in these towns. But his good work endured only for a few years, for on his death these territories fell into the hands of rapacious French Legates who gradually roused the smouldering spirit of revolt. It burst into a flame in 1375, when the Legate in Romagna provoked the Florentines to fury by sending the terrible "English Company" to raid and maraud in Florentine territory. The Republicans flew to arms and organised a fierce revolt throughout the regions pacified by Albornoz, so that within a few months the Papal State was once more lost to the Church. It was this that finally determined the return of Pope Gregory XI. to Rome (1377), while the brutal Breton Company carried fire and sword on his behalf into the towns of Romagna; but Gregory died shortly after his arrival and the Roman people seized the opportunity to insist on the election of an Italian as his successor. They had their will in the consecration of the Neapolitan Urban VI., perhaps the most melodramatically wicked of all the long line of Popes; but the French Cardinals rebelled and elected the

Captain of the Breton Company, Cardinal Robert of Geneva, as their Pope and carried him with them to Avignon. Thus to the Babylonish Captivity succeeded the Great Schism, and Italy was left once more to her own destinies.

CHAPTER V

MILAN AND VENICE—ANGEVINS AND ARAGONESE AT NAPLES—THE MEDICI IN FLORENCE

(1311—1492)

By the middle of the fourteenth century the great house of the Visconti had been established for two generations at Milan and had carried its Viper crest into all the towns of Central Lombardy which had of old fought either as allies or enemies of the Republic. Vigorous and aggressive, this house was continually pushing its fortunes by wars, intrigues, and alliances, for its strength was based upon the wealth and industry of Milan and its members had little cause to fear discontent at home. According to the original grant of their *dominium* by the Emperor Henry VII in 1311 they ruled as *Imperial Vicars* in return for a money payment to the Emperor, and bore the title—confirmed by the Great Council of 900 burghers—of *Dominus generalis*. This was sufficient for the first three generations, of whom the famous Archbishop John (1339-1354) even acquired Bologna, the headquarters of the Papal power in the old Exarchate, and induced Genoa, worn out by faction strife at home, to accept him as her overlord. Neither of these acquisitions endured for long, but they are typical of the energy and success of the house, which further increased its fame a little later by two resounding royal marriages. Lionel Duke of Clarence, son of Edward III., came to Milan in 1368 to wed the daughter of the reigning Visconti and to take

her dowry of 200,000 gold florins, and a little later the Lord of Milan obtained for his son, Gian Galeazzo, the hand of Isabella de Valois, paying 500,000 florins for the privilege. Thus the wealth of Milan was used to ennoble her bourgeois princes, and the final stage was reached when, in 1395, Gian Galeazzo, in his turn, bought the title of Duke from the bankrupt Emperor Wenceslaus and married his daughter Valentina to the Duke of Orleans. But from this latter union sprang a heritage of grief for Italy.

This first Duke of Milan, Gian Galeazzo Visconti (1378-1402), was by far the ablest of his house and all but succeeded in carving a kingdom out of the North and Centre. Never taking the field himself, he employed from his palace at Pavia the native companies of mercenary soldiers who had by now sprung up in imitation of the earlier English and Breton Companies; he expelled the last of the Scaliger line from Verona and annexed both that city and Vicenza; he acquired Pisa by purchase and persuaded Perugia, Assisi, and Siena to ask for his signory, and, taking no account of a divided Papacy, he besieged and took Bologna. In the meantime he was building the Cathedral of Milan and the Certosa of Pavia; rebuilding the latter's ancient university and constructing the canal that still exists between Pavia and Milan. He dreamed of nothing less than the crown of Italy, and when Bologna fell began to encircle Florence and make preparations for his coronation there. But fever took him, and he died (1402), and on the ruins of his little empire Venice stepped in and absorbed Verona, Vicenza, and Padua, while Florence at length acquired Pisa, long the object of her ambition, and Bologna and the Umbrian towns relapsed to the Pope. The death of Gian Galeazzo, in fact, marked a turning-point in the development of the greater states of Italy, for while the Duchy of Milan subsisted under his son, Filippo Maria, the confusion caused by his sudden disappearance directly favoured the expansion

of Venice on the mainland and gave a strong impetus to the ambition and prosperity of Florence. Venice had already defeated her bitter rival, Genoa, at sea in the War of Chioggia (1378-1380), and now, as we have seen, had acquired a mainland state bounded by the Alps, the Adige, and the Piave. Untroubled by internal faction owing to the remarkable solidity of her aristocratic constitution, the Republic of St. Mark was now at the height of her power and influence, until, with the flooding-in of the Turk over the decaying Eastern Empire, she was obliged to fight for her life against a foe that gave no quarter. The heroism of Venice in stemming the tide of Turkish invasion, unsupported by the rest of Europe, is too little known in the West, and constitutes, together with her genius for beauty, her eternal claim upon the gratitude of Christendom. Genoa, on the other hand, had already passed her prime by the end of the fourteenth century, owing to her ungovernable internal factions, and after her defeat by Venice in the War of Chioggia had invited the suzerainty of the King of France. The French, always glad of a foothold in Italy, had sent a garrison to occupy the town in 1396.

Meanwhile in the South the French dynasty established by Charles of Anjou in 1266 had maintained itself throughout the fourteenth century, although at the cost of many bloody struggles with the Hungarian branch of the Angevin family and with other Provençal or Angevin pretenders raised up against it by the later Popes of Avignon. By the murder of the unhappy Queen Joanna I. in 1382, the Hungarian branch had established itself at Naples in the person of King Charles III., and the son of this King, young Ladislaus, aspired to play a great part in the politics of Italy and of the Papacy (1399-1414). Taking advantage of the weakness of the divided Papacy and of the ancient anti-Papal sentiments of the Roman people, he made himself master of Rome in 1408 and received the submission of all the principal cities of

the Papal State; visions of the Imperial crown even hovered before his eyes. His influence frustrated the efforts of the Council of Pisa in 1409 to put an end to the Great Schism, for Ladislaus dreaded the election of a single Pope as being less amenable to his influence. But with his early death in 1414 the fabric he had reared fell to the ground. The Council of Constance (1415-1420) insisted on the abdication of all the three Popes who at that time divided Christendom, and sent Cardinal Oddo Colonna to Rome as Universal Pope (Martin V.); and under the rule of Ladislaus' feeble sister, Joanna II., the Kingdom of Naples relapsed into a chronic state of war between rival mercenary captains, or *condottieri*, representing the claims of rival pretenders to the succession. In 1424 the Queen adopted as her heir Alfonso, King of Aragon, who claimed descent from Manfred, but then, under Papal pressure, revoked the gift and died in 1435 bequeathing the kingdom to the Angevin prince, René of Provence. The famous condottiere, Sforza the Elder, had made his fortune in Joanna's wars on the Angevin side, and at his death in 1424 passed on his system to his able son Francesco. But owing to the intervention of the Duke of Milan, son of the great Visconti, it was at length the Aragonese who won the prize at Naples. With the reign of the romantic Prince, Alfonso the Magnanimous (1435-1458), some sense of security and peace returned to the distracted country. But none the less did the Angevin claim to Naples survive across the Alps, to be the source of many and bitter ills for Italy in the time to come.

The fifteenth century in Italy—the wonderful Quattrocento—is the time in which the Italian genius in the arts of civilisation flowered most abundantly: the age of fruition before the desolating storms of the Foreign Invasions. In Florence, the first quarter of the century saw the rule of the stately merchant aristocracy known as the *Ottimati*, under whose patronage

Ghiberti cast the bronze doors of the Baptistery, Brunelleschi reared the dome of the Cathedral, and Masaccio founded the school of painting which has made his fame second only to Giotto's. Guicciardini, most distinguished of Florentine historians, writing a century later, says that "in that time the city of Florence was in a most blessed state, abounding with excellent men in every faculty and full of admirable citizens." But the lower classes were ground down by heavy taxation, raised in order to pay for the Republic's frequent wars against the Duke of Milan, and gradually the rich banking family of the Medici put themselves forward as the champions of the poor against the ruling order; incurred banishment in 1433, but returned next year on a wave of popular enthusiasm to inaugurate the subtle and nameless form of despotism which the Florentines were at last prepared to accept. The rule of Cosimo de Medici (*Pater Patriæ*), of his son Piero and his grandson Lorenzo covered sixty years of the fifteenth century, and rested on the acquiescence of the populace in their manner of manipulating all elections to office while maintaining the Republican forms. If faction occasionally raised its head, the Medicean mob was called into the Piazza to sanction by acclamation the nomination of a new Committee, or Balìa, to reform the state, and the Balìa consisted always of Medicean partisans. Thus Florence had lost her liberty, but loved her bondage, and the glory of learning, literature, and art during this period is too well known to need any mention here.

In the political field, moreover, Cosimo de Medici, far-sighted statesman as he was, deserved well of his city and of Italy by the efforts he made to secure internal peace and to put an end to the long and costly rivalry between Florence and Milan. The last Duke of Milan of the Visconti line, Filippo Maria, died in 1447, having given his only daughter in marriage to the successful condottiere, Francesco

Sforza. The Milanese attempted a brief return to liberty on Filippo's death, with the curious episode of the "Golden Ambrosian Republic," but faction awoke at once, Venice turned a deaf ear to the Republic's appeal for support, and Sforza was at length called in by his partisans within the walls. With his establishment as Duke of Milan (1450), Cosimo de Medici, who was personally attached to him, induced the Florentines to lay aside their traditional hostility towards Milan and to make alliance with its Duke instead. Venice presently joined their league at the Peace of Lodi (1454), and by the mediation of the first Pope of the Renaissance, Nicholas V., even Alfonso of Naples joined in the general peace. Thus all Italy enjoyed a brief respite before the coming of the Foreign Invaders, and at a time when both England and France fell a prey to dynastic and feudal struggles that checked their advance in civilisation, and Spain was only just emerging from a primitive state of society, Italy was leading the world in all the gracious arts. The traffic in Greek manuscripts from the East had begun long before the fall of Constantinople in 1453, having received a strong impetus from the visit of the Eastern Emperor to Florence, with many a learned attendant, to take part in the Council that was to unite the Greek and Latin Churches in 1439. Pope Nicholas V. (1447-1455) encouraged the Classical Renaissance by founding the Vatican Library and by the patronage he gave to wandering scholars, while his successor, the celebrated Æneas Sylvius Piccolomini (Pius II.), lives immortalised in all his varied genius in the frescoes that adorn the cathedral of his own Siena. Cosimo de Medici founded and patronised the Platonic Academy at Florence; the "Good Duke," Federigo of Urbino, professional condottiere though he was, laid up his priceless treasure of Greek and Latin manuscripts, bound with red velvet and clasped with silver, during these years; and at the courts of lesser Princes, such

as those of Ferrara and Mantua, the share of the learned ladies in revelries and pageants begins to mark the emergence of women from the seraglio stage of civilisation.

The peace of Italy was rudely broken in 1478 by the attempt of one Riario, nephew of the turbulent Pope Sixtus IV., to murder the two Medici brothers, Lorenzo and Giuliano, grandsons of Cosimo. Giuliano was actually killed in church, but Lorenzo escaped, and Florence flew to arms against the Pope on behalf of her popular lord. The internal wars of Italy, however, were waged with little bloodshed by this date, owing to the unwritten code observed by rival condottieri, and though Sixtus was able to persuade his ally, the King of Naples, to send troops raiding into Tuscany, Lorenzo de Medici boldly visited the King himself in Naples and convinced him of the ever-present danger of a French-Angevin invasion of Naples if he and the Pope continued to stir up trouble in Italy. The King (Ferrante, son of Alfonso) admitted these arguments, but it was only when the Turks, in their all-conquering career, descended upon Otranto and sawed its Archbishop in two as a warning to others that he effectively called off his troops from Tuscany (1480). The rest of Lorenzo de Medici's reign at Florence (1474-1492) was spent in a constant endeavour to preserve Italy from "these Ultramontanes," as he called them, but his greatest obstacles were the two Popes, Sixtus IV. and Innocent VIII., who, whenever they had trouble with the King of Naples, were only too easily inclined to play the threat of an Angevin pretender. Lorenzo knew, however, that the direct representative of the Angevin line, King René of Provence, had died in 1481 bequeathing his claims on Naples to the King of France; and though Louis XI. was too astute to take them up, the danger of a French invasion was from that moment very near. Lorenzo therefore established a hold over the weak-minded Innocent VIII. and so succeeded in

staving off the evil day; and though the land was full of forebodings the breathing-space endured for his lifetime. His position as Lord of Florence was one which it needed all the traditional arts of his house to maintain, and besides his patronage of poets and Neo-Platonists and his interest in the Carnival revels, we find him directing his army of spies and appointing his committee of *Sgravatori*, or assessors of taxes, whose business it was to crush Lorenzo's enemies by vindictive assessments and to grant favours to his friends. But the fine statecraft of Lorenzo de Medici was not sufficient either to avert the storm from Italy or to secure the undisturbed possession of the *Signory* to his son. The prophecies of the mighty Dominican, Fra Girolamo Savanarola, who invoked the Sword of the Lord to cleanse the sins of Italy, were to have their fulfilment, and the fortunes of the Medici were to sink for a time in the general catastrophe.

CHAPTER VI

THE AGE OF THE FOREIGN INVASIONS

(1494—1530)

THE foolish son of Louis XI. of France, Charles VIII., had looked forward from childhood up to the glorious enterprise of chasing the usurping Aragonese from the throne of Naples. Born in 1470, he waited only until fortune had united the resources of France in his hands before setting forth on an adventure to which he was continually incited, amongst others, by the exiled Angevin nobles escaping from the butcheries of Ferrante and Alfonso, Kings of Naples. The road was opened to him by the usurping Duke of Milan, Ludovico Sforza, son of Francesco, who, having supplanted his nephew, the rightful Duke, dreaded an attack by the King of Naples, the young man's

father-in-law. Thus supported by the wealth of Milan, Charles VIII. crossed the Alps with 60,000 men in September, 1494, but he bore with him his cousin Louis, Duke of Orleans, representing the Orleanist claim on Milan, which had passed into France with Valentina Visconti in 1398; and Ludovico knew that the French Prince was only biding his time. These two French claims, that of the King on Naples and that of Orleans upon Milan, make the dominant note of the Foreign Invasions of Italy; but the former by its very success provokes the counter-claim of the rising monarchy of Spain, representing the legitimate branch of Aragon, and leads in the end to the deadly trial of strength between Francis I. and Charles V. at Pavia, to the Sack of Rome and all the woes of Italy.

The invasion of Charles VIII. was a brilliantly successful affair as far as the immediate conquest of Naples was concerned, for the young King Ferrante II. fled without a blow, and Charles was able to enjoy for three months the delights of the corruptest city in Europe. But, in his rear, the Duke of Milan had turned against him, for Louis, Duke of Orleans, had remained in the north, and was proclaiming himself rightful Duke, so that when Charles, in alarm, marched northwards out of the trap, he was confronted by an Italian army on the skirts of the Apennines, and had some difficulty in breaking through (1495). But French steel showed its superiority, and Charles passed safely back over the Alps—only to die four years later, leaving the crown to that very Duke of Orleans, now Louis XII., who had already cast his eyes upon Milan. But the significance of Charles's passage had lain mainly in the events that it provoked in Florence, where the young son of Lorenzo de Medici had fled in panic before a rising of the mob, and Charles had been welcomed instead by the prophet Savonarola. Florence, in fact, regained her liberty and adopted a Republican form, based on the election of a Great Council of some three thousand burghers, while

the Priors and the "Gonfalonier of Justice" formed the executive. The great Dominican inspired these proceedings, and for a short four years pursued his astonishing task of weaning the Florentines from all their gracious sins and transforming them into exalted Puritans. But he was pitted against the most sinister force of the age, in the person of the Spanish Pope, Alexander VI. (Rodrigo Borgia), who, with his sons, daughters, and mistresses, occupied the Vatican Palace from 1492 to 1503. Alexander had no great difficulty in allying himself with the reactionary forces in Florence to put an end to the Friar's career, and on May 23, 1498, Savonarola and his two companions, wasted and racked by torture, expiated their idealism on a gallows erected in the Piazza. But not even so would Florence allow the return of the Medici, and by the creation of a "Gonfalonier for life," under strict constitutional guarantees, staved off the return of despotism for another dozen years.

It was upon Milan that the full brunt of the next wave of invasion fell (1499-1500). Ludovico Sforza, whose young wife, Beatrice d'Este, had made his court the most brilliant in Italy, who had nurtured the prosperity of the Duchy in every way, save that of encouraging the military virtues, fell before Louis XII., because he was obliged to rely upon Swiss mercenaries to defend him. A Switzer betrayed him to the French, and he was led captive across the Alps to die in the castle of Loches, while the French established their rule in Milan. A little later, Louis XII. and Ferdinand I. of Spain (originally King of Aragon) made a secret bargain for the partition of Naples, and successfully dispossessed the last king of the older Aragonese line in the summer of 1501; but in the next year the spoilers fell out among themselves. The French were chased back to Gaëta by the wonderful Spaniard, Gonsalvo de Cordova, who, by the new tactics he adopted, was the first to make the Spanish infantry a formidable power in the wars of

Europe. At the battle known as the "rout of the Garigliano" the Spaniards achieved the total destruction of the French (1503). Naples was annexed to the crown of Spain, and on the death of Ferdinand without sons in 1516, it passed, with all the other Spanish possessions, into the hands of his grandson, Charles V., who, being also grandson of Maximilian, Emperor-Elect, inherited a domain so vast that Naples sank to the status of a mere province, and was ruled and fleeced henceforth by Spanish Viceroy.

The three Popes who followed each other through the first period of the Invasions—Alexander VI. (1492-1503), Julius II. (1503-1513), and Leo X. (1513-1521)—all attempted to reap their profit from the clash of the stronger powers, and all plunged Italy deeper in the fatal game of foreign wars, alliances, and leagues. Alexander dreaded the coming of Charles VIII., since the French king appeared to be inspired by Savonarolist ideas of Reform and a General Council; but by adroitly flattering the newcomer and providing him with money he pushed him safely on to Naples, and the danger passed. With Louis XII. Alexander had an easier task, for Louis needed his help in the matter of a divorce, and could, therefore, be relied on to pay for it by assisting the schemes of the Pope's son, Cæsar Borgia. Cæsar was duly created Duke of Valentinois and given the hand of a French Princess in marriage, while a detachment of French troops helped him, in 1500-1501, to subjugate the local tyrants of Romagna, and to assert his own claims in that debatable land. Universally suspected as he was of the murder of his elder brother, the Duke of Gandia, Cæsar had recourse to wholesale murder in getting rid of the petty despots of Romagna, but he succeeded in founding no permanent state upon their ruins, for at his father's death his own power crumbled and the great enemy of his house, Giuliano della Rovere, ascended the Papal Chair as Julius II.

Julius left his mark upon Italy in many directions,

partly as the Pope who had the hardihood to pull down old St. Peter's and to lay the first stone of the colossal temple that we know to-day, partly as the bitter enemy of Venice, ready to incur any risk from the foreign armies in order to abase the pride of the Republic. For Venice had, on the downfall of Cæsar Borgia, seized two towns which Julius declared to belong to the Papal Patrimony, and for this reason, after many years' preparation, he launched against her the armies of France, Spain, and the Empire, allied for the purpose in the celebrated League of Cambrai. Venice survived the attack, conciliated the Pope by the surrender of the towns, and presently succeeded in diverting his hatred from herself to France, so that within two years the Pope had organised a new League of Spaniards, Swiss, and Germans to drive the French from Italy. He succeeded so well that even Milan was freed, and a young son of Ludovico Sforza recalled to reign over the much improverished Duchy (1512); but at Florence, whence the Medici were still excluded, the triumph of the Pope's Holy League brought with it the enforced return of a tyranny now little loved. The sack of Prato by the Spaniards opened the way for the re-entry of the two sons of Lorenzo de Medici, of whom the younger, Giovanni (soon to become Pope Leo X.), immediately gathered all the threads of power into his hands. Florence submitted with as good a grace as she could muster, but an under-current of Savonarolist feeling subsisted, to find its vent in the rising of 1527 and the heroic endurance of the Siege.

The French had been driven from Italy, but with the accession of Francis I. and his paladins the tide turned once more, and at the Battle of Marignano Francis reconquered the Duchy of Milan (1515). For six years the French lorded it in the Lombard capital, draining the city of its wealth, and it was only when the election of Charles V. to the Imperial Crown gave a leader to the opposite party that Pope and Emperor

combined once more to expel the French. Leo X., whose famous utterance on his election, "Let us enjoy the Papacy, since God has given it to us," set the tone of his whole Pontificate and made it the crowning moment of the Italian Renaissance, foresaw trouble from the activities of a certain monk at the University of Wittenberg, one Martin Luther, and by co-operating with the Emperor against the rebel inclined also to the Imperial side in Italian politics. He had found a native commander of genius in his young cousin Giovanni de Medici, head of the younger branch of the house, and by helping to finance his fine body of troops made possible the taking of Milan from the French in November, 1521. But Leo himself only survived the victory by a few days, and at his sudden death, Giovanni ordered his men to wear mourning for their patron, and so earned for himself the title by which he has gone down to history—*Giovanni delle Bande Nere*. His company was the only body of troops that upheld the honour of Italian arms during these wars, and gave Machiavelli his text for the ceaseless appeal he made, in the last years of his life, for a native Italian militia wherewith to expel the barbarian. But the effort was an isolated one and expired with the death of Giovanni in a wayside skirmish in 1526, leaving Italy still under the heel of her Transalpine masters.

The question whether France or the Empire was to be the final winner in the race was decided on the field of Pavia, in February, 1525, when the superior ability of Charles's generals won the day and the King of France himself was taken prisoner. The whole of Northern Italy as well as Naples was now actually subject to the Imperial armies, though at Milan the last native Duke, Francesco Sforza, showed signs of reaction against his patrons, and endeavoured to organise an Italian League, with French support, to drive them out. Feebly supported by the second Medici Pope, Clement VII., whose petty spirit hindered every

decisive operation, a League was formed in 1526 between Venice, Sforza, and the Duke of Urbino, but this only precipitated the final catastrophe. George Frundsberg and his Lutheran landsknechts descended the Alps in the autumn to chastise both League and Pope, and with the firm intention of hanging the latter. Mutinous and starving, they disobeyed the superior orders of the Viceroy of Naples, bidding them return, and pressed on towards Rome, with the army of the League hanging a day's march in their rear and appearing to be actually pushing them in that direction. They broke in through the Leonine Walls on May 6, 1527, and spread unchecked over the city to murder, sack, and pillage. For seven months Rome suffered every agony at the hands of this bestial horde, and when, at length, Pope Clement had raised the necessary ransom and rode away in disguise to Orvieto, the Rome of the Renaissance lay in ruins behind him. "In Rome," wrote a Spanish captain who had gone through the Sack, "all sins were openly committed—sodomy, simony, idolatry, hypocrisy, fraud. Surely, then, what has come to pass has not been by chance, but by the Judgment of God."

Yet within eighteen months the helpless Pope had made a treaty with his persecutor, Charles V., by which he hoped to repair, not indeed the ravages of Italy, but the fortunes of the Medici family. For Florence had, at the news of the Sack of Rome, cast out the weak Medicean government and returned to the Republican forms devised by Savonarola, and as a Republic she faced her last and hardest trial. Charles V. came in state to Bologna in November, 1529, to decide the fate of the different states of Italy; agreed to give peace to Venice and to Milan, and to allow the last Sforza Duke to return to the latter, on payment of huge indemnities; opposed the Pope's wishes in the matter of certain towns which Clement desired from the Duke of Ferrara; but in that of the chastisement of the insolent burghers of Florence and

the reinstatement of the Medici consented willingly to all that Clement demanded. The Prince of Orange was detailed to command the besieging army—partly composed of the very men who had sacked Rome—and during the winter of 1529-1530 this able leader completed the encirclement of the walls. But the spirit of the Florentines rose to meet every danger. They organised, on Machiavelli's principles, a City Guard of 3,000 young men, trained and commanded by officers from Giovanni's Black Bands, and a militia from the countryside as well; they made Michelangelo Procurator-General of the city walls, and set him specially to devise means for defending the outpost of San Miniato. And outside in the *contado* they had a guerilla leader of genius, Francesco Ferrucci, who harassed the Imperial troops, cut off their convoys, and succeeded in maintaining the food supplies of Florence, so that hope and courage rose high. But the professional leader, Baglione of Perugia, whom the Signory had engaged to conduct the defence, proved faithless; Ferrucci was decoyed away to Volterra, his great depôt of stores seized in his absence and himself overpowered and killed as he tried to return to Florence by the northern hills. Then Baglione treated with the enemy; the Medicean party in the town raised their heads, and the Signory were forced to capitulate (August, 1530). Florence suffered no sack, but Pope Clement was content with nothing less than despotic power for his family, and sent his bastard cousin Alessandro, degenerate representative of the Elder Branch, to bear rule in Florence while the last vestiges of the Republic were extinguished. All around, Italy lay exhausted under native or foreign tyrannies, while the Imperial commanders raised, to overawe the cities, those many-angled fortresses which symbolised the subjection of the land.

CHAPTER VII

ITALY UNDER SPANISH DOMINATION

(1530—1713)

ON the death of the last Sforza Duke in 1535, the Duchy of Milan passed as a lapsed fief to the Empire and was bestowed by Charles V. on his son, Don Philip of Spain. Milan thus became an appanage of the Spanish Crown and the headquarters of the Spanish power in the north, supporting a large garrison of troops and supplying those frequent "donatives" which the Hapsburg Kings of Spain drew in ever larger proportion from their Italian provinces as Drake and the English buccaneers contested their monopoly of American gold. Yet the prosperity of Milan did not wholly decline, for Northern Italy remained immune from war in the later sixteenth century, and the industry of the Milanese made of their city the international mart for arms and, as a Milanese chronicler put it, "For the art and splendour of dress." So the city of Leonardo and of Beatrice d'Este lived on under her conquerors, in tolerable contentment, whereas in Naples, the southern centre of Spanish power, the expedients to which the Viceroys were driven to keep the nobles divided and the mob subservient made of it the most backward and miserable of the states of Italy. The whole gamut of feudal abuses still survived on the vast estates of the nobles, where brigandage flourished in a society that could not maintain itself by ordinary means, since the produce of labour was all filched away by the exactions that enabled the Duke or Baron to live in idleness in distant Naples. Turkish pirates raided the undefended coasts and forced the peasants to withdraw to the hill-towns, while in Naples itself the *lazzaroni* increased in numbers and in squalor and provided, ever and anon, the material for some brief outburst of mob rage

against their rulers. Such was the fierce rising against the attempt of the great Viceroy Toledo, to introduce the Spanish Inquisition in the year 1546—an attempt which neither he nor any subsequent Viceroy ventured to repeat—and such the outbreak, a century later, led by the young fisherman Masaniello against a newly-imposed tax on fruit. This rising developed into a formidable revolt, remarkable for the insistent demand of the insurgents for the *Charter of Charles V.* (granted in 1532), but in the absence of any possible alternative the Spaniards resumed their sway after nine months, and Naples relapsed into its old condition. Yet over all shone the sun of Southern Italy, making life tolerable where otherwise it would have withered, and nursing in the soil certain seeds of revival which were to grow and bear fruit in the eighteenth century.

The part played by the Imperial armies in the final reduction of Florence lent to the restored Medicean rule a decidedly Spanish character, especially since a Spanish garrison was admitted into the newly-built citadel on the northern edge of the city. But on the murder of Duke Alessandro in 1537, a young man rose to power—Cosimo de Medici, son of Giovanni delle Bande Nere—who brought in the new blood of the Younger Branch, and was gladly accepted by the Senate as Duke of Florence. This able youth, having defeated and crushed the leaders of the older Republican party, set himself to create a well-organised despotic state from the scattered materials around him, and in his long reign of thirty-seven years succeeded in forcing Florence through the necessary transition from the mediæval to the modern age. Allowing no voice in public affairs to his subjects, he yet reformed their finances, their courts of justice, their police, and by establishing a national army induced the foreign garrison to retire. Then in 1554 he picked a quarrel with the ancient Republic of Siena, on the ground that she harboured Florentine exiles, and paid and fed the

Imperial army that finally quenched her liberties (1554-1555). Though Siena capitulated to the King of Spain (Philip II.) after a siege that had reduced her population from 40,000 to 10,000, Philip ceded the town with all her territories to his ally, Cosimo de Medici, and so at length the ancient Ghibelline stronghold fell under the yoke of Florence. Cosimo skilfully ordered the administration so as to leave the Sienese the appearance, though not the substance, of liberty, and in later years a member of the Medicean family usually held his court there. "The Sienese," wrote a Venetian ambassador in the seventeenth century, "have always been hostile to the Florentines, but with the Medici they have no feud, and endure their yoke the more readily because they see the Florentines subjected to it also."

The crowning triumph of Duke Cosimo was to acquire from the Pope the title of Grand Duke of Tuscany (1569). He bequeathed it in 1574, together with a peaceful and well-ordered state, to his son Francesco. The Medici Grand Dukes succeeded each other thenceforward from father to son in the Pitti Palace for 160 years, troubled by no movements of revolt and still exercising, at least in the seventeenth century, their traditional rôle as patrons of art and learning. They formed the priceless collections of the Uffizi Galleries; they protected Galileo in his old age, but physically they grew more and more degenerate until they died out in 1737 with the dropsical debauchee, Gian Gastone.

The great Popes of the Counter-Reformation who followed on Clement VII.—Paul III. and IV., Pius IV. and V.—were almost more concerned with European affairs and with the gigantic struggle against Protestantism than with the politics of Italy, and it is not until we come to Sixtus V. (1585-1590) that we find a remarkable Pope exerting the whole force of a determined will to bring some order out of the chaos of the Papal States. For nowhere else in Italy,

not even in Naples, were the principles of taxation so ill understood or the system of justice so corrupt as in Rome and the States of the Church, and the result could be seen in the universal curse of brigandage which lay like a blight over whole regions which should have been prosperous and fruitful. Sixtus attempted to deal with the brigands—who were estimated at 27,000 men—by an energetic system of extermination, but since he left the roots of the disease untouched, the cure was merely temporary. He endeavoured also to reform the finances of the Papacy by his system of loans (Monti), or annuities granted to nominal office-holders in return for a lump sum. This was, in fact, one of the earliest forms of national debt, but the fatal ease with which Sixtus resorted to it soon loaded the Papacy with a burden of debt which it could not carry, so that ever fresh taxation on an impoverished state was required to meet the interest. Far more memorable, however, were Sixtus' attempts to embellish Rome, where he built the Via Sistina, raised the wonderful flight of marble steps from the Piazza di Spagna to the Trinità de'Monti, and pushed on the completion of the dome of St. Peter's. His architect, Fontana, has indeed left his mark over all the central part of the city as we know it to-day.

The successors of Sixtus V. in the seventeenth century were mainly remarkable for their colossal nepotism and for the success with which they founded the princely families whose palaces and villas are familiar to all wanderers in Rome and the Alban Hills. Borghese, Ludovisi, Barberini, Pamfili, Chigi—these are the Popes who founded permanent dynasties, rather than the Borgia and Riario who aimed at sovereign principalities. The first of them, Paul V. (1605-1621) was, however, involved at the outset of his reign in a serious contest with the Republic of Venice on the question of the jurisdiction of the state over criminous clerics, and met with so determined a resistance from the Venetians as compelled the attention

and interest of the rest of Europe. They were led in this matter by the Servite monk, Fra Paolo Sarpi, who encouraged them to defy a Papal interdict and to expel the Jesuits, and as a counterpoise to the Spanish power beyond the Mincio they appealed to France and Henri Quatre and so secured, without war, a settlement which amounted to a resounding victory. Sarpi was attacked by Papal *bravi* next year and left for dead in the streets of Venice, but he recovered and lived to write his well-known history of the Council of Trent and to be honoured as their foremost citizen by the Venetians.

Venice also protected the great Galileo so long as he remained a teacher of mathematics at the University of Padua, but when after his removal to Florence he provoked Pope Urban VIII. (Barberini) by his *Dialogue* on the Copernican System, he found himself cited to Rome and forced to recant his beliefs under threat of torture (1633). This Pope Urban had a passion for constructing great fortifications around the cities of the Papal States, and rebuilt a section of the walls of Rome round the Janiculan, but under the rule of his turbulent nephews Rome herself became as disorderly as in the days of the Borgia, while by his military expenditure and his disastrous war against the Duke of Parma he plunged the Papacy into still deeper debt. When he removed the ancient bronze rain-pipes from the roof of the Pantheon and cast them into cannon he was rewarded by Pasquino's famous epigram: *Quod non fecerunt barbari, fecerunt Barberini.*

The Popes of the later seventeenth century were largely occupied with a long-drawn quarrel with Louis XIV. concerning the privileges of the French Embassy in Rome, and in all the picturesque atmosphere of Papal Corsicans and French musketeers a grim trial of strength was waged which developed into something more significant still in the struggle between Louis and Innocent XI. (1676-1689) on the Liberties of the Gallican Church. But while Innocent sustained the

enemies of Louis in distant Holland and England, he was confronted at his own doors, in the vast central tract of Italy known as the States of the Church, by a problem of misery and depopulation which taxed his abilities as a reformer to the utmost. He and the last Pope of the century, Innocent XII. (1691-1700) grappled with it honestly and devotedly: made great economies, reformed the courts of justice, and put down the curse of nepotism; but the wealth squandered by so many generations of Papal nephews and favourites could not be recalled by a few years of reforming zeal. The lands comprised in the far-off *Donation of Pippin* sank into ignorance and destitution almost as complete as those of the Kingdom of Naples.

But in the north-eastern and north-western corners of Italy two vital states remained, one the survival of an age-long hegemony, and the other the cradle of a new and vigorous power. Venice, throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, still fought the Turk at intervals and still maintained her ancient constitution, fortifying the rule of Doge and Great Council by the mysterious terror surrounding her Council of Ten and her Three Inquisitors of State. But in spite of heroic efforts her Eastern Empire dropped away from her with the loss of Cyprus in 1571 and of Crete in 1669. Although her veteran commander Morosini overran the Peloponnese in 1687 and blew up the Turkish powder magazine stored in the Parthenon, his triumph was short-lived, for the Turk resumed his steady advance, and had reconquered the whole of Greece by 1716. But Venice at least preserved her liberty and still commanded respect among the states of Europe, although the sources of her strength were surely sapped. The discovery of the Cape route to India by the Portuguese and the orientation of Europe towards America threw Venice out of the great ocean race for trade; but she still dealt in all the products of the Mediterranean and passed them on across the Alps to Austria and Southern Germany.

The story of the Venetian Bailies at Constantinople and of their endless skill in humouring and managing the Turk is the tale of a glorious decline, for therein Venice performed a truly European function and, amid great risks, kept her position and prestige.

The Duchy of Savoy, on the other hand, had only become a truly Italian state with the Treaty of Câteau-Cambrésis in 1559, when the young Duke Emanuel Filibert earned his right, by winning the battle of St. Quentin for the Emperor, of returning to a state that had long been overrun by French and Spanish troops. He and his French Duchess took up their residence at Turin, and performed for Savoy and Piedmont much the same task of reorganisation and reform which Cosimo de Medici had carried out for Tuscany. Gradually the foreign garrisons were withdrawn, order restored, and a native army created, so that both France and Spain came to woo the Duke's alliance as keeper of the passes into Italy. A long minority in the middle of the seventeenth century, with a civil war between the French and Spanish factions in the ducal family, weakened the dynasty by placing it finally under French influence, so that by the time of the accession of the boy-Duke Victor Amadeus in 1675, Savoy was almost a vassal state to the France of Louis XIV. But it was this Prince—weak and *chétif* in his youth and never of much physical presence—who by his native courage and astuteness carried his little country safely, though at mortal risk, through the wars of the League of Augsburg and of the Spanish Succession, saw Piedmont harried and overrun by French armies, first under Catinat in 1690 and again under Vendôme in 1704, but never, though he constantly betrayed his allies, played false to the interests of his sturdy people. At length, in 1706, he and his cousin, Prince Eugene, inflicted an overwhelming defeat upon the French at the Battle of Turin, and saw the whole of Northern Italy freed from the menace of the Franco-Spanish Empire. Naples also, which had

submitted to Louis' grandson, Philip, on his accession to the throne of Spain (1701), surrendered to an Austrian force claiming the Kingdom for their master by right of descent from Charles V. (1707). At the Peace of Utrecht in 1713 this conquest was confirmed, and Duke Victor Amadeus of Savoy reaped his reward by being promoted King, though only of Sicily—an unnatural combination which was amended a few years later by the exchange of Sicily for Sardinia. But Lombardy, though he desired it greatly, remained beyond his reach. It was claimed by the predominant partner in the Grand Alliance, the Austrian Empire, and Milan, as the result of the long war, merely exchanged the yoke of Austria for the yoke of Spain.

CHAPTER VIII

FROM THE TREATY OF UTRECHT TO THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA

(1713—1815)

THE formidable reaction of Europe against the overgrown power of Louis XIV. appeared to have triumphed with the Treaty of Utrecht; but in Italy the adjustment was not a final one, and for another thirty-five years the pendulum continued to oscillate between Franco-Spaniards and Austrians for hegemony in the Peninsula, with Savoy always on the flank of the greater powers, watching for every chance of expansion. The most important result of these dynastic wars was the establishment, in 1734, of a branch of the Bourbon family at Naples, where the old division between Aragon and Anjou lived again in the successful expulsion of the Austrians, lineal descendants of the Aragonese, by the young Don Carlos, son of the French King Philip of Spain, and great-grandson of Louis XIV. The young man's

mother was Elizabeth Farnese, a descendant of Pope Paul III., and a lady of such determined character as to earn her in after years the title of the Termagant of Spain. But the fact that she was Italian increased the significance of her son's arrival, and disposed the Neapolitans to accept him with more than the usual rejoicings. He established himself without difficulty both in Naples and Sicily, and with the help of his Tuscan minister, Tanucci, applied himself honestly to a mountainous task of reconstruction. During his twenty-five years' reign at Naples (1734-1759) much was accomplished in the reform of the finances and in the relations of Church with State; for Carlos obtained a Concordat from Pope Benedict XIV., which enabled him to put an end to such immemorial abuses as the immunity of the clergy from taxation and the right of asylum and sanctuary (1741). But the fundamental canker of feudalism and all the miseries that flowed from it lay beyond his power to cure, and continued to poison the body politic until, with the coming of King Murat, a more relentless remedy was at length applied.

The Austrian Emperor had only been induced to recognise the Bourbon conquest of Naples on condition that Tuscany should, on the extinction of the Medici line, revert to the Empire, so that when this occurred in 1737 the Grand Duchy was conferred on Francis of Lorraine, husband of Maria Theresa. This brought in a dynasty that embodied the very spirit of eighteenth-century enlightenment, and Tuscany became, under Francis and his son Leopold, the model state, wherein serfdom and feudal abuses, torture and the death penalty were all abolished, the Inquisition suppressed, and the overgrown religious foundations of the Medici sternly reduced, while the finances were completely overhauled and an annual budget made public. Yet the Florentines but half approved the change and looked with less love upon their patient German Princes than did the Piedmontese

upon their reactionary King Charles Emanuel, son of the great Victor Amadeus, who dragged them through two devastating wars and narrowly escaped disaster many times. But in the end he pushed the frontier of his Kingdom to the River Ticino, within a few miles of Milan (1748), and then for another five-and-twenty years of peace presided over an orthodox and conservative state where the ideas of the French Encyclopædists found no currency. The Inquisition and the Society of Jesus flourished instead, while the male population of Savoy and Piedmont performed evolutions in the barrack squares, almost in the manner of Frederick's grenadiers.

The latter half of the eighteenth century was, however, for the greater part of Italy, a time of peaceful progress and prosperity, when the mental atmosphere cleared after the oppression of two centuries and the revolt of the great monarchies of Europe against the Jesuits was reflected in the victory even at Rome of the anti-Jesuit party, with the issue of the famous Bull of Clement XIV. suppressing their Order (1773). At Naples a revival of letters had begun even under the Austrian occupation (1707-1734), with the work of the great historian Giannone, of the philosopher Vico and of the political economist Genovesi, while the growth and florescence of Italian opera during this century made of the San Carlo Theatre at Naples and of the Scala at Milan centres of music famous not only in Italy but throughout Europe. The comedies of Goldoni still enshrine for us, with flashes of immortal wit, the frivolous life of Venice in this century of her decline, while the "Arcadian Academy," founded at Rome before the end of the previous century, and intended to restore Italian literature to the simplicity of Nature, had been copied in every little capital and had resulted, not, indeed, in a return to Nature, but in the vogue of the wholly artificial cult of the shepherdess. At Naples, King Carlos was busy transforming the slovenly city into

an imposing capital, so that the French traveller, Des Brosses, could write of it in 1741: "To me, Naples is the only Italian city that gives you the feeling of a capital—with the number and movement of its people, the perpetual din of coaches and carriages, its Court, proper in form and brilliant in aspect—the style and magnificence of its nobles—all this contributes to give it an animated and lively exterior, like that of Paris or of London, and totally unlike that of Rome." But he adds that the *lazzaroni*, of whom there were 25,000 who had never learnt to do anything but beg, were "the most abominable canaille, the most disgusting vermin that ever swarmed on the surface of the earth."

Both Carlos of Naples and Charles Emanuel of Piedmont-Sardinia were succeeded by inferior sons, who allowed stagnation to creep once more over the machines of government. But Ferdinand of Naples married, in 1768, Marie-Caroline of Austria, sister of Marie-Antoinette of France, a union that was not without its importance for the future. Still, the fortunes of Piedmont and Naples would probably not in themselves have been sufficient to attract the attention of revolutionary France; it was the possession of Milan by the Austrians that brought the army of General Bonaparte into the Plain of the Po.

The coming of Napoleon into Italy was as the passing of the whirlwind that uproots all the ancient trees, both the sound and the rotten together, that have for so long overshadowed the land. No doubt the prime object of the French was to chastise Austria, the arch-enemy of the Republic; but this was no war of the eighteenth-century type, leaving the life of the people unchanged, whichever standard emerged victorious, but a social upheaval besides of the most far-reaching kind. Napoleon had no sooner established himself at Milan, amid the rejoicings of the populace, than the ancient cities of the Exarchate threw off the Papal yoke and proclaimed their freedom; and when

he advanced into Venetia a party arose in every city there, eager to betray the central government and to uphold the French. Only the terrible efficiency of Bonaparte in plundering the territories that he occupied checked the general enthusiasm, and prepared the way for the reaction of 1799. But at first the "liberator" carried all before him, both in the military and the reforming sense; swept aside and disarmed the Piedmontese; drove the Austrians out of Lombardy and crushed them again and again in the neighbourhood of Mantua; made a swift expedition into the Papal States (February, 1797) and imposed the renunciation of Bologna, Ferrara and all "Romagna" on the astonished Pope (Pius VI.); then passed through Venetia on his way to settle matters with the Archduke Charles on Austrian territory and signed with the latter the Preliminaries of Leoben, making over the Venetian terra-firma to Austria in exchange for Lombardy (April, 1797). A month later the Doge and Senate voted their own extinction, and by the definitive Treaty of Campo-Formio, signed in October of this year, Venice herself, after being occupied by French troops, was formally handed over to Austria. Then Bonaparte returned to France, and was absent from Italy for two and a half years (November, 1797-May, 1800), mainly occupied with the adventure of Egypt; but in his absence French columns marched into Rome and Naples, joyously overturning the Papal and Neapolitan governments and driving King Ferdinand and his Queen into exile at Palermo (January, 1799). Nelson, master of the sea since the Battle of the Nile (August, 1798), could only act as their escort to the island capital. But with the spring of 1799 the tide turned, for Souvaroff's Russians entered Lombardy and drove the French before them, until only Genoa remained in their hands, while the columns from Rome and Naples, hastily recalled, found themselves involved in the general rout. Behind them ruin descended on the Republicans of Naples,

who had deeply compromised themselves by their support of the French, and a brutal *Giunta* carried out the King's vengeance on his subjects, by whip and gallows, while Nelson looked on from the deck of the British flagship. French ideas were at a discount in Italy in the autumn of 1799; but at that moment Bonaparte landed at Fréjus on his return from Egypt; the *coup d'état* of Brumaire made him First Consul and in the spring he planned his famous descent on Italy by the Great St. Bernard.

The victory of Marengo (June 14, 1800) made Napoleon once more master of Italy, and this time his hold was not to be dislodged until the general break-up of his Empire. From the "Cisalpine Republic," his starting-point in the north, his power gradually spread until he had annexed Piedmont to France, crowned himself King of Italy with the Iron Crown of the Lombards (1805), sent his brother Joseph to conquer Naples (1806), made his sister Elisa Grand Duchess of Tuscany and finally expelled the Pope and annexed the Papal States to France (1809). Throughout these vast territories the institutions of the past were uprooted, so far as human ingenuity could do so, and the Italians brought to live under the same uniform system of administration, justice, and conscription. In the north, where Eugène Beauharnais was Viceroy of the Kingdom of Italy proper, the middle-class which had become prosperous under the enlightened Austrian régime of Joseph II., welcomed the "career open to talent," and took its part in local affairs. The Italian regiments, trained at Milan, served with credit in the campaigns of Wagram, Spain, and Moscow. In the south, the two years' reign of Joseph Bonaparte was sufficient to set reforms in motion which, steadily pursued under his successor, Joachim Murat, finally delivered the Kingdom of Naples from the immemorial curse of feudalism.

But here the situation was complicated by the presence, across the narrow Straits of Messina, of the

Bourbon King and his Austrian Queen, harnessed in an uneasy alliance with Great Britain and supported by British troops and a British naval squadron. English subsidies provided Marie-Caroline with means for sustaining a savage brigand warfare against the French in Calabria, until King Murat took the matter in hand in earnest and put down the brigands without mercy. An extraordinary episode of these wars was furnished by the activities in Sicily of the British Ambassador and Commander-in-Chief, Lord William Bentinck, who, finding it impossible to work with the royal couple, supported the Sicilian barons in what was practically a constitutional revolt against them. The Sicilian Constitution of 1812 became famous in after years as one of the battle-cries of the *Risorgimento*, but at the time, Bentinck was disappointed in his hopes that it would regenerate the Sicilian people. Though he deported the unpopular Queen in a British ship (1813) and himself indulged in an election campaign on the British model through the length and breadth of Sicily, time was not granted to him to complete the education of a people who had shown so pathetic a trust in him and in the "noble English nation." Reaction was at the gates, and as the Napoleonic power waned in 1813 and collapsed in 1814, King Ferdinand pursued his silent march towards the resumption of unfettered power. Bentinck was recalled by the home government, after issuing too bold a proclamation to the Italian people from Genoa, calling on them to rise in defence of their ancient liberties, and Ferdinand was eventually restored to Naples by the Congress of Vienna, with a secret clause binding him not to tolerate within his dominions any institutions "incompatible with the principles adopted by his Apostolic Majesty [the Austrian Emperor] in the government of his Italian provinces." The Sicilian Parliament was therefore abolished by a Decree of December, 1816.

As in Naples, so with the rest of Italy. Pope

Pius VII., the "Prisoner of Fontainebleau," returned to Rome in May, 1814, and one by one the same year saw the restoration of the various Dukes and Kings whose thrones Napoleon had emptied. But it was no mere return to the *status quo ante bellum*. The independence of Venice was not restored, for Republics were out of fashion, and the Austrian black and yellow waved over the whole of Northern Italy from the Lagoons to the River Ticino. Still greater was the change in spirit from the easy-going tolerance of the eighteenth century to the black reaction of the Restoration. Toleration and French ideas had led to the Revolution and all the woes that followed in its train; it was now time for the rulers to act together, and to take thought for the safety and welfare of their people. In such a spirit Austrian troops policed the north, and Austrian influence prevailed at the court of every princeling brought back by the Congress of Vienna.

CHAPTER IX

THE "RISORGIMENTO" (RESURRECTION)

(1815—1870)

THE well-known saying of Prince Metternich, the Austrian Chancellor, that Italy was "only a geographical expression," was certainly an apt remark when applied to the congeries of little states into which the Peninsula was divided after the Restoration of 1815. In the North the Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia shared the Plain of the Po in unequal measure with the Austrian provinces of Lombardy-Venetia; then came the Duchies of Parma, Modena, and Lucca, the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, the Papal States, with their important extension north of the Apennines known as the Legations and Romagna, and finally the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily. In all these states it

was the special task of rulers and police to keep the middle-class in check and to prevent the expression of opinion. What wonder, then, if the adaptable Italian character dived underground, and found its principal distraction in the formation of secret societies? The *Carbonari*, introduced into Naples during Murat's time, became a vast network of conspiracy with lodges everywhere, and organised the ill-fated risings of 1820 in Naples and of 1831 in the Papal States; but when these were both put down by Austrian troops, and the hope of French intervention died away, discouragement invaded the ranks of the conspirators. It was then that a new and purer gospel arose with the preaching of the young Genoese advocate, Giuseppe Mazzini, who, imprisoned and then exiled on a charge of carbonarism, founded the society of *Young Italy* (*La Giovane Italia*). Its aim was definite and simple: Independence and Unity; the means a mass-war of the people against Austria. "God and the People" was Mazzini's watchword, self-sacrifice the dominant note of his appeal. He offered the leadership of the whole movement to Piedmont's young King, Charles Albert, in 1831, but Charles Albert was bound by a solemn oath to his predecessor never to change the constitution of the state, and for long years he kept his word. His persecution of *Young Italy*, in fact, waxed so fierce that after an abortive rising a certain young sailor of Nice, Giuseppe Garibaldi, fled with a price on his head to South America, there to learn in a rough and hardy school the priceless art of guerilla warfare. Mazzini, from his sad exile in London, kept bright the faith of *Young Italy*, but other currents also arose, which bade fair as the 'forties advanced to capture the hopes of the ruling classes. These were the *Neo-Guelfism* of Gioberti, the orthodox abbé who looked to see a free federation of Italian states under the primacy of the Pope, and the *Albertism* of the Piedmontese Cesare Balbo, whose book, *The Hopes of Italy*, sought to focus all expectations on

the leadership of Piedmont. All these different lines of thought were to play their part in the drama of 1848-1849, but at first the election of a Liberal Pope, Pius IX, in 1846, seemed to give a decided predominance to the doctrines of the Neo-Guelfs.

It was, in fact, the sudden relaxation of oppression in the Papal States, more than any other single cause, that gave the impulse for the Italian Revolution. "Pio Nono" became in a month the idol of all Italy, and in spite of his obvious hesitation, it was inevitable that the growing enthusiasm for the National Pope should be coupled with growing animosity towards the Austrian. The year 1847 passed amid gathering hopes and fears—hopes of Piedmont and her King and army, fears lest the good Pope should after all join the forces of reaction. Then, with the new year (1848) Palermo rose against her Neapolitan garrison, demanding the *Constitution of 1812*, and cast out the troops after desperate street fighting. The whole of Sicily followed suit, and Ferdinand II. could only forestall a revolution in Naples itself by swearing to a Constitution. Constitutions followed thick and fast in Turin, in Florence, and finally in Rome (March 14), but so swiftly did events move in that month of wonders that these great tidings were soon totally overshadowed by the astounding news that Venice and Milan had both expelled their Austrian garrisons. The feat of the Milanese in overpowering and driving out 15,000 Austrian troops, with Marshal Radetzky at their head, resounded through Europe, but in the neighbouring Piedmont it produced just sufficient dread of the Red Republic to cause the King to hesitate in giving the order to march against Austria. In those few days Radetzky rallied his men and got them safely to the Quadrilateral—the four great fortresses of Mantua, Verona, Peschiera, and Legnago which formed Austria's *tête de pont* at the foot of the Brenner—so that when at length the Sardinian army moved in pursuit it was against a foe prepared at all

points. By August, Charles Albert was back again in Milan, beaten and despairing, and by the truce he signed with Radetzky Milan herself was handed back to Austria.

The King and the Royal army were out of the game for the time, but the war was carried on by Garibaldi and his Legionaries in Rome and by Daniele Manin and his Venetians in the City of the Lagoons. For in November Pope Pius gave up his difficult part and fled to Gaëta, there to take shelter with King Ferdinand, and in his absence Mazzini and Garibaldi came to Rome and proclaimed the Republic. For a few months they showed the world an example of government without violence or party madness, but the Republic's existence was doomed in advance. The Pope's call for help to all the Catholic Powers was answered, to the astonishment of many, by France instead of Austria, for the new President of the French Republic, Louis Napoleon, was anxious to stand well with the French clericals. In April, 1849, a French expedition arrived before Rome to demand re-entry for the Pope. Garibaldi defended the walls about the Gate of San Pancrazio with a picked élite from Lombardy, prototypes of the *Bersaglieri*, but the French were in overwhelming force, and after a month of truce and a month of desperate fighting the Republic surrendered at discretion (June 30, 1849). Garibaldi marched out, threading his way with unerring skill through the encircling forces, but he failed to reach Venice, the goal of his desire. Hunted day and night, he barely escaped with his life, while Venice, which for five months had withstood the Austrian Empire single-handed, surrendered on August 24. Charles Albert had once more tempted fortune and lost all at Novara (March 23); but his abdication in favour of his son, Victor Emanuel, gave a gleam of hope for the future. The young King of Piedmont abode staunchly by the Constitution to which his father had sworn, in spite of much temptation to the contrary, and by so doing

made his little kingdom the one hearth of liberty in a country now re-enslaved from the Alps to Sicily. For Ferdinand II. was supreme once more in the South, and by his brutalities at the re-taking of Messina had earned the name of "Bomba."

Thus the Italian revolution appeared to lie quenched in despair. Austria lorded it once more at Milan, enforcing her will by lash and gallows; the Pope was now influenced in all things by Cardinal Antonelli, a low-born time-server and reactionary; the smaller Duchies, and even Tuscany, were obliged to admit Austrian garrisons. The ex-Ministers of King Ferdinand, who had served him during his brief constitutional period, were now condemned to lie in chains in the island dungeons of Nisida and Procida, but they there came under the eye of an English Conservative Member of Parliament, William Ewart Gladstone, who recorded what he saw in the burning words of the *Letters to Lord Aberdeen* (1851). It was the beginning of England's active sympathy with the cause of Italian liberty. Not in the South, however, but in sober, constitutional Piedmont, were the foundations of Italy's recovery laid in these years of the early 'fifties. There the true leader emerged in the person of Count Camillo Cavour, an aristocrat by birth, detested by his own order for his advanced opinions, and equally distrusted by the populace for his fundamental conservatism; but a man of such transcendent power, such knowledge, capacity and daring, that Piedmont first, and then all Italy, came to lay their burdens upon his shoulders. His long sojourns in France and England during the 'forties had brought him many friends abroad, so that he was sometimes accused of knowing foreign countries better than he knew Italy; his nickname of "Milord Camillo," in fact, covered a certain jealousy. But in his heart there burned the southern fire, so that his friends need not have feared.

In 1852 Cavour became Prime Minister of the sub-

Alpine Kingdom, and though his colleagues complained that he was "as despotic as the devil," he knew that his true function was to educate the Piedmontese in the uses of liberty and to convince Europe that his master, Victor Emanuel, would soon speak and stand for Italy. In 1854 he sent a Sardinian contingent to join the French and English in the Crimea, and by so doing earned the right to draw Europe's attention to the condition of Italy at the Congress of Paris. In 1858 he persuaded Napoleon III., during two days of tête-à-tête at Plombières, that it was in the interests of France to assist Piedmont in expelling Austria from the Lombard plain. He came away with only a verbal pledge, but this was translated into a secret treaty a few months later. How he manœuvred Austria, in April, 1859, into the position of aggressor, so that Napoleon could not evade his obligation, will always remain one of the master-strokes of bold diplomacy. The shade of Victor Amadeus, hovering near, would have smiled to see the French, whom he had outwitted and crushed, pouring over the Alps in battalions and brigades, to help his Savoyards "pluck the Italian artichoke, leaf by leaf." They beat the Austrians at Magenta (June 4th), and just beat them at Solferino (June 24th), but there Napoleon halted. Difficulties were accumulating in his rear, difficulties with his wife, with the French clericals, with Prussia, nor did he relish the news that Italy was rising up on every side, expelling her Dukes once more and clamouring for union with Piedmont. Napoleon had wished instead for a Federation under the Pope. He therefore signed the Truce of Villafranca with the Emperor Francis Joseph, by which only Lombardy and Parma went to Piedmont and the other states were to receive back their former masters. Victor Emanuel accepted it "*pour ce qui me concerne.*" But Cavour broke into furious rage, and Italy never forgave Napoleon III. However, the terms of Villafranca proved impossible to carry out, for France and England made it clear

that they would not tolerate an Austrian invasion of the liberated Duchies, and the Duchies remained staunch for union with Piedmont. In March, 1860, Napoleon, at the price of the cession of Savoy and Nice to France, agreed to the holding of a plébiscite throughout the Centre. The result was an overwhelming vote for annexation to Piedmont.

Then followed that amazing exploit of Garibaldi and his Thousand, when, in the teeth of official (though not serious) opposition from the King and Cavour, the General embarked his handful of ill-armed volunteers in two old ships near Genoa, and set forth to overturn the Bourbon Government in Sicily. Favoured by fortune and the accidental presence of two British ships of war, they landed at Marsala unmolested, marched across the interior, defeating a much superior force of Neapolitans on the way, and on the night of May 27th broke into Palermo. Three days of street fighting, with the more and more effective aid of the population, were sufficient to take all heart out of the Royal garrison, so that on the 30th, when Garibaldi's last cartridge was spent, the British Admiral in the Bay had the pleasure of presiding at the signing of an armistice whereby the Neapolitans agreed to evacuate the island. Ten weeks later Garibaldi crossed the Straits of Messina and was soon driving the Neapolitans before him once more in headlong rout. By September 6th the young King Francis, son of Ferdinand, had fled to Gaëta, and the next day Garibaldi entered Naples, regardless of the Bourbon troops who still garrisoned the forts.

Once more the turn passed to Cavour and the King, for they feared lest the Redshirts should press on to Rome and provoke trouble with Napoleon, whose garrison of French troops still protected the Pope. Risking the wrath of Austria, the Piedmontese Bersaglieri marched through the Papal States, liberating as they went, defeated the *Papalini* near Loreto, and finally joined hands with Garibaldi at a village to the north

of the river Volturno. The Dictator laid his kingdom at the feet of Victor Emanuel and retired to the little island of Caprera, with a sack of seed-corn and a hundred francs for all the reward that he would accept. The South voted, like the Centre, for annexation to Piedmont, and Victor Emanuel found himself King of all Italy—save only Rome and Venice.

How these two were finally united to the rest made a less glorious chapter of *Risorgimento*, for Cavour's guiding hand was lost in 1861, through his too early death, and the lesser men who followed him had much ado to steer a course between the impatience of Garibaldi and his volunteers on the one hand, and on the other the still implacable opposition of France and the Pope to the annexation of Rome. But in 1866 the Austro-Prussian war opened the way to Venice, though the conquests of Garibaldi in the Southern Trentino, off-set by the naval disaster of Lissa, were disregarded at the peace and Italy was obliged to rest content with the bare province of Venetia, leaving an "unredeemed" population both in the Trentino and in Trieste and Istria.

At the end of 1866 the French garrison was withdrawn from Rome in accordance with a Convention signed two years before, but this did not mean that Italy was at liberty to "go to Rome," and when Garibaldi made his attempt in October, 1867, the French returned in force; the volunteers were defeated at Mentana, and Garibaldi himself was arrested at the Papal frontier by Italian troops. For three years more the impossible situation was prolonged, but then the disasters of France made Italy's opportunity, and Sedan opened the way to Rome. To the last the aged Pope refused all negotiation, so that the Italian troops were obliged to batter a way in at the Porta Pia (September 20, 1870). He refused the proffered "Law of Guarantees," and successive Popes have followed his example and have played before Europe ever since the part of "Prisoner of the Vatican."

CHAPTER X

MODERN ITALY

(1870—1922)

THUS the Kingdom of Italy was at length united, amid the sincere rejoicings of England, the grudging acquiescence of Austria, the patronage of Prussia, and, after the fall of Napoleon, the indifferent welcome of unhappy France. The dream of unity and independence was fulfilled, but where was the golden age that the patriots had promised? Italy laboured instead, year after year, through a slough of poverty, debt, and disillusion, with everything to do and inadequate resources with which to do it; with the "rich-proud cost of outworn buried age" there at her feet, and yet no leisure nor peace in which to enjoy it. The task of reconstruction was almost superhuman, demanding large capital expenditure in every department of government—on roads, on railways, on schools, on the whole apparatus of modern civilisation, and demanding, too, a continuance of the race of giants who had made the Risorgimento. But this was denied to the Third Italy; the impulse was exhausted, and the immemorial arts of corruption which had flourished under the Bourbon and the Spaniard fastened on the machine of government and clogged the wheels still further. Parliamentary institutions, which Cavour had used so finely at Turin, became in Rome the sport of sordid interests and of a far-reaching Governmental corruption. Yet, in spite of all, the fundamental tasks were accomplished; railways and roads were built, a national army was organised, brigandage gradually extirpated in the South, and, when poverty still ground down the agricultural labourer, a national movement of emigration was encouraged which took scores of thousands of Italians to seek wealth overseas in North and South America.

But the supreme failure of these first thirty years lay in the want of co-operation between Government and people, due to a fatal lack of perception of the social needs of the time. High taxation of necessities ground down the labourer; high protection made his bread dear, and when he adopted in self-defence the Marxite doctrines of class-war the only reply of the Government was to strike at him in blind terror. When in the early 'nineties the farm-workers of Sicily organised themselves in *Fasci* or Unions, with the object of improving their pitiful conditions of life, the Government sent troops and police against them and finally deported 1,800 of them to what was termed *domicilio coatto* on the rocky islands which the Bourbon Kings had used as political prisons. This was the work of Francesco Crispi, originally an advanced Republican, but a man of powerful will and despotic temper, who rose to power in 1887, and again answered the country's call for a strong man in 1894. Having quelled the unfortunate Sicilians he embarked on a crusade against Socialism throughout the country, using the terror caused by the *domicilio coatto* as a convenient weapon. He then diverted attention from home troubles by embarking on an Abyssinian adventure, and sent an Italian army, ill-equipped for tropical fighting, to find its bloody grave at Adowa (1896). Crispi fell before the universal rage, but the last years of the century were still an unhappy time for Italy, for the instinct of the working-classes to combine was still strenuously opposed by a Government drawn from the Right. A tragedy of errors led to the massacres of Milan of May, 1898, but the demand of the Ministry for special powers of coercion after order was restored produced a prolonged and angry struggle in Parliament, where the parties of the Left at last combined in a stand against the threat of the Government to proceed by Royal Decree if the Chamber refused to pass their measure. A General Election which

largely increased the strength of the Left led to the fall of the reactionary ministry; and the opening of a new reign (that of the present King, Victor Emanuel III.) coincided with the advent to power of the Left, under their sagacious leader, Giovanni Giolitti (1901).

In the meantime the foreign policy of Italy had been mainly coloured by hostility to France, which still disapproved the abolition of the Pope's Temporal Power, and angered Italy in 1881 by announcing the establishment of a French Protectorate over Tunis. Sore at the rebuff, Italian public opinion leant towards the Germanic Powers instead, and in the next year the first draft of the Triple Alliance was signed between Italy, Germany, and Austria. But the price that Austria exacted was the suppression by Italy herself of the Irredentist agitations carried on by Italians in Trento, Trieste, and Dalmatia. Renewed in 1887, the Triple Alliance was then strengthened by a Mediterranean understanding to which England also adhered, and with a growing sense of security against French ambitions, public feeling towards France gradually improved towards the end of the century, especially since it was found that Italian settlers were welcomed in Tunis and were not molested in their language or customs. When, therefore, the long ascendancy of Giolitti and the Left began in 1901, the omens were more favourable both in foreign and internal affairs than they had yet been since the attainment of unity.

For in spite of all the shackles imposed by the backwardness and dire poverty of the Centre and South, by the difficulties of finance and by the still unsolved deadlock with the Church, the sheer labour put into the development of the country was at last beginning to bear fruit. Having no coal, Italy was early driven to exploit her resources in water-power, and her hydro-electric engineers became the foremost in Europe. The Alps were tunnelled by co-operation

with France and Switzerland; every little village in the Apennines began to have its supply of electric light. Thus when Giolitti at length adopted a policy of social reform; when trade unions were allowed and the long-delayed rise in wages took place, the whole country took a step forward in prosperity, which was reflected in the budget surpluses of the new Ministry. In the dozen years before the outbreak of the Great War Italy definitely ranged herself in line with the modern nations in such matters as education, the growth of industrialism, banking and commerce; and incidentally she made trial of liberty and Parliamentary government as the normal conditions of public life. Giolitti eschewed the *domicilio coatto*, but became instead a past-master in the art of political manipulation and jobbery, so that the best men avoided public life and the Chamber commanded little respect among the multitude. The franchise was gradually widened and the behest of the Vatican that the faithful should take no part in elections gradually relaxed through fear of Socialism, but the proportion of those who took the trouble to vote remained in the neighbourhood of sixty per cent.

In 1911 Giolitti was pushed by the Nationalist party into declaring war on Turkey over the question of Tripoli and Cyrenaica—a portion of the North African coast which the Great Powers had always admitted to be of special interest to Italy. Carefully prepared and carried out, the expedition attained its object of expelling the Turks from those regions, while the Italian fleet also seized twelve islands of the Greek Archipelago (the Dodecanese) and held them in pawn pending the fulfilment of certain conditions which have never since been fulfilled. The islands have been definitely annexed since the Great War. A year later the Turks, on the eve of their disastrous struggle with the Balkan States, bowed to the inevitable and recognised the annexation of Tripoli.

In the meantime feeling in Italy had been growing extremely cool towards her Teutonic allies, especially Austria, whose annexation of Bosnia in 1908 had been carried through with cynical disregard for the "compensation" clause of the Triple Alliance. When, therefore, Austria, in alarm at the outcome of the Balkan Wars, sounded Italy in 1913 as to her support in the event of an Austrian attack on Serbia, Giolitti's Government replied bluntly in the negative. A year later, Vienna did not even consult Rome on the ultimatum to Serbia, and when the fatal declaration of war followed, Italy announced her neutrality. Giolitti had by this time been replaced by a Ministry of the Right, under Antonio Salandra (March, 1914), but the majority of the Chamber was still Giolittian, and as the first winter of the War dragged on and a strong current made itself felt in the country for intervention on the side of the Allies, Giolitti and all his followers maintained their Neutralist attitude. But they were overborne by the Italian people, who took matters into their own hands as the spring advanced, resenting the negotiations which Germany's Special Envoys carried on with the Giolittian Opposition behind the backs of the Government. D'Annunzio's orations fanned the flame of enthusiasm for intervention; but the Chamber was still obstinate. Salandra and his Foreign Minister, Sonnino, now determined on intervention, were driven to resign on May 13, but after two days of universal demonstrations the King reinstated them in office and the Chamber bowed to the people's will. On May 20 they voted the necessary credits, and at midnight on May 23, 1915, Italy was at war with Austria.

On the course of Italy's three and a half years of war it is impossible to do more than touch in so brief a survey as the present, but it should at least be said that the impression which prevailed in this country until recently that Italy had not quite "pulled her weight" in the War was founded on very defective

information. As the true figures of Italy's casualties have at length appeared, and the knowledge of those who were in contact with the Army from the beginning has filtered down through wider circles, it has been realised that Italy's sacrifices in men were as heavy, in proportion to population, as those of the British Empire (amounting to over 600,000 dead), and that the dogged tenacity of her peasant soldiers in attacking again and again on the difficult Isonzo front, against a strong enemy amply prepared, was as fine as anything that occurred on the plains of France. By September, 1917, the Italians had pushed on into the hills beyond the Isonzo, at appalling cost, and were preparing a further advance when the Russian débâcle occurred and certain German divisions could be spared to make a thrust at the Italian line. There followed the defeat of Caporetto, when the Isonzo front was pierced and turned, involving the retreat of the Second and Third Armies and the evacuation of the greater part of Venetia. But in those terrible weeks the Italian people rallied behind their men with a grim unanimity unseen since the beginning of the War, and endured privations in food and fuel which were never known in England. Five British and six French divisions were hurried out to reinforce the Piave line, where the Italian troops were halted and reorganised, but they did not come into position till December, and meanwhile the fierce attacks of Germans and Austrians on the Grappa and Asiago plateaus were fought to a standstill by the Italians themselves. In the next year the foreign reinforcements were reduced to three British and two French divisions, but Austria was still obliged to maintain her main army in Italy and could never afford to send reinforcements to the crumbling German line in France. This was Italy's chief service to the Allied cause, and one of vast significance. Finally, in the great advance of the Italian armies known as the Battle of Vittorio Veneto (October 27-31, 1918), the Austrian

Empire went down in irremediable collapse, and Italy swept on to occupy Trento and Trieste. An armistice was signed on November 4, and in Paris next year Italy's claim for the Brenner frontier was confirmed, though President Wilson's objections made it impossible to carry out the Adriatic provisions of the Treaty of London, on which Italy had agreed to enter the War. Since none had foreseen that the War would end in the extinction of the Austrian Empire, and that the Slav lands round the head of the Adriatic would be claimed by a Greater Serbia, a new situation had arisen, and Italy and Serbia were left to settle the knotty problem by direct negotiation. Italy first renounced, in the Treaty of Rapallo (November, 1920) the portion of Dalmatia that had been assigned to her, securing in exchange a defensible frontier on the further side of Istria; and after many vicissitudes the little town and port of Fiume were at length ceded to Italy (January, 1924).

Italy's "natural frontiers" had been attained, but an ardent Nationalist propaganda which raged during the two years after the War refused to admit the fact and led the people to feel instead nothing but an angry discontent with the results of their sacrifices. Add to this the economic distress produced by the depreciation of currency and the rapid rise in prices, leading to constant strikes for higher wages; the poverty of the state, which, in 1920, had a deficit of fourteen milliards of lire, and the spreading-in of Bolshevist ideas from Russia can be readily understood. Communist Councils rose to power in many towns; strikes grew more and more political in tone; the national flag was flouted, officers mishandled in the streets. But the disease produced at length its own remedy in the rise of the Unions or *Fasci di Combattimento*—groups of ex-service men, led by the ex-Republican and Socialist journalist, Benito Mussolini, who waged war impartially on profiteers and Communists and presently established a complete ascen-

dancy in the countryside through the connivance of the authorities at their use of Government arms and lorries. In 1922 the Central Government suffered from a growing paralysis, but when, in October, the "Black-shirts" converged upon Rome for a *coup d'état*, the Prime Minister and Cabinet of the day decided to ask the King for martial law and a "whiff of grapeshot." Victor Emanuel, however, saw that the country and army were behind the Fascisti, refused to sign the decree, and welcomed Mussolini as constitutional Prime Minister. But he had opened the door to more than a change of government. The Old Italy went down with the March on Rome, and on its ruins a remarkable edifice is now arising, compounded of many qualities and many public virtues, but in which respect for liberty and toleration of opponents have no place. The *domicilio coatto* is once more an ordinary weapon of the state; the Press is gagged, Parliament reduced to complete subservience, while opponents are terrorised by the fear of the unpunished bludgeon. But, on the other hand, order has been restored and a spirit of loyalty and ardour generated which has swept out many corrupt corners of the old administration. The experiment of the Corporative State is now being tried, and to a people that have produced the Roman Empire, the Catholic Church, and the Italian city-states all things may be possible when they enter once more on the path of political experiment. Fascism is a challenging doctrine, provoking in its own home either fervent devotion or bitter hatred, but we in this slower atmosphere can afford to watch it without passion, and to wish well in any event to the gifted race that has produced it.

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